

AMERICAN TV SERIES IN CHINA:  
HOW ONLINE VIEWING IMPACTS PERCEPTIONS  
OF REALITY, CULTURAL VALUES AND  
IDENTITY

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## **Abbreviations**

ANOVA	Analysis of variance
CCTV	China Central Television
CNNIC	China Internet Network Information Centre
CNSA	China Netcasting Services Association
CPC	Communist Party of China
CVS	Chinese Value Survey
DVD	Digital Video Disc
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HBO	Home Box Office
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IP	Internet Protocol
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer
MPAA	Motion Picture Association of America
NBC	National Broadcasting Company
NPC	Nationalist Party of China
PRC	People's Republic of China
TV	Television
SAPPRFT	State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of China
SNS	Social Network Site
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
U&G	Uses and Gratifications
VCD	Video Compact Disc
WVS	World Values Survey

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## Abstract

With the growth and popularity of the Internet in China, American TV series can bypass the strict Chinese broadcasting censorship of TV programs and be watched directly. These TV series, of course, are also an influential American cultural product, raising a number of concerns regarding their impact.

The Chinese government has been and still is concerned about the influence of American TV series on Chinese audiences, especially on the audiences' cultural values. The loss of traditional Chinese cultural values, it is feared, could confuse and even change viewers' morality, leading to uncertainty over right and wrong and the weakening of cultural identity. Most Chinese scholars who support the government's perspective claim that watching American TV series could cause the erosion of Chinese culture. However, these scholars lack evidence regarding such alleged effects. Specifically, there is a void in the research related to how Chinese audiences perceive American cultural values through viewing American TV series and how their perceptions of American cultural values may impact their perceptions of Chinese culture. This is vital for understanding the impact of American TV series in China, as the online environment provides more freedom of access than TV content. This thesis, through four distinct research methods, analyzed online comments, surveyed people online, conducted a quasi-experiment, and interviewed Chinese audiences, to triangulate the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences' cultural values. The thesis employed a theoretical framework by using three well-known theories from the communications literature: cultivation theory, the firewall model, and uses and gratifications theory.

The findings show that the societal and individual firewalls play an important role in hindering the impact of American TV series to a larger audience group in China. The firewalls limited the Chinese audience of American TV series to a specific group. However, this study's findings also support the claims of cultivation effect in an online environment, although the audiences' motives for viewing American TV series was a factor in determining any cultivation effects. In addition, this study found that the Chinese TV series and American TV series have different orientations in relation to reflecting cultural values, and, as such, the American TV series have a different effect than Chinese TV series on Chinese audiences. The study also explores the Chinese audiences' understanding regarding American cultural values during viewing American TV series, which have defined the compatible and incompatible values in Chinese cultural context. This study contributes important insights on the impact of American TV series in China, and could be a reference for the Chinese government when considering their cultural policy in relation to foreign cultural products.

**Key words:** American TV series, online streaming, cultural values, identity, perceptions of realities, cultivation, gratifications.

## Chapter 1 Introduction

“The worst situation for Chinese audiences was when 18 TV channels broadcast the same Chinese TV drama at the same time.” (Brzeski, 2014a)

-- Lu Di, a professor at the School of Journalism and Communication, Peking University

“The Chinese college students are nurtured by American TV programs. Without them, they would know less about the US and the world”. (*Nightly Talk*, 2014)

-- Xu Ji, a columnist and journalist

### 1.1 Introduction

Developing nations encounter problems when external new ideas and new ways of life challenge their traditional models. This is the result of two factors: first, the internal force brought by economic development with the accumulating energies that demand the corresponding political and social reforms. Rapid and significant changes in a developing society could undermine people's expectations about their own lives, as satisfaction with the local standard of living are influenced by the wealthiest nations because of their dominance in global communications (Diener, 2000). Second, as a result of external influences combined with advanced technologies from industrialized countries, mainly the Western world, people in developing countries may look more favorably upon Western cultures and products, but with contempt upon their own (Alden et al., 2006; Batra et al., 2000). As traditional values create cultural identity and pride in its past, the traditionally-minded citizens, particularly the older generation, dedicate their efforts to preserving their cultural heritages from being threatened by external cultures. Cultural identity is the identity or feeling of belonging to a social group that has its own distinct culture, as part of the self-conception and self-perception (Barzilai, 2005). A strong cultural identity is vital for developing countries today, as the lack of a strong cultural identity will cause the confusion of cultural references due to massive amounts of information brought to developing countries as a result of globalization (Ling, 2008). Also, confusion in cultural values will cause the members in one culture to lose their sense of right and wrong within a social context (Vauclair, 2009). Despite the endeavors of the older generations, however, Western ideas keep influencing developing nations, often colliding sharply with traditional values. This has been the case in many developing countries.

In a sense, China is no exception to this trend. The earliest Western influence can be traced to the middle of the nineteenth century, as Britain forced China to open its borders during the Opium Wars (Capen, 1913; Zhao, 2014). Western influence stimulated the longing for industrialization, but did not change the social reality in China. After the Opium Wars, China was colonized by the European powers, and a string of civil disturbances followed. The civil rebellions weakened the central imperial government, which by this time was under foreign control. These foreign influences also provoked anti-colonialism movements, the largest of which was The Boxer Rebellion, which was put down by a multi-national military force at the turn of the twentieth century. The next significant event was the invasion and occupation of China by Japan, which ended with the defeat of Japan in World War II. This was followed the Chinese Civil War (1946-1949). After the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the country was governed by the Communist Party of China (CPC) and was mainly influenced by the Soviet Union until 1958.

Moving to the second half of the twentieth century, key events included the Great Leap Forward (1958-1962) and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), which resulted in economic recessions. The Great Leap Forward was a campaign that aimed to rapidly transform the agrarian economy into an industrialized and collectivized socialist society. However, overly optimistic government policies led to millions of deaths from famine. The Cultural Revolution, which aimed to reassert the dominant Maoist ideology by eliminating the capitalist and traditional elements from Chinese society, failed to establish a new ideology and set back the Chinese economy instead. During Mao's time as China's ruler, traditional Chinese culture was suppressed, and the influence of Western culture was blocked in China.

After Mao's death, the Chinese government decided to improve the economy by embracing market reforms and allowing other countries access to the Chinese market. This began when Deng Xiaoping announced the Open Door Policy in 1978. Chinese economic policy began to encourage foreign companies to trade and invest in China. This opened new opportunities for modern China as a nation participating more in world trade. These economic reforms improved the material life of Chinese people after a long period of austerity, giving people both the social and political inspiration to improve their lives. The people of China appeared to be eager to find a cultural solution to cope with the rapid economic and social changes taking place in their country. The Open Door policy also brought cultural products from other nations into China. As one part of this trend, Chinese television stations brought American television series to China from 1980.

Chinese scholars believe that American television (TV) series (美剧 meiju in Chinese) are the most influential American cultural products in China for several reasons (Huang, 2015; Ma, 2013; Yang, 2015). First, American TV series embody televised American culture, which is believed to be close to real life, covering many topics of American lives considered ‘real’ by Chinese audiences (Li, 2014c). Second, advancements in technology and television production have largely improved the quality of American TV programs in both technique and content. Third, it has been easy to access American TV series online, and online access is also more flexible than viewing on television. In addition to this, the unofficial and localized subtitle translations on the internet have eliminated the obstacle of understanding American TV series.

The recent growth of American TV viewing in China suggests an interest in American culture among the Chinese public. This attraction, when delivered online, is unprecedented, as it blurs national boundaries of culture flows. Despite the popularity of American culture in China, cultural conflicts still exist. The interaction between these two different cultures in Chinese audiences’ minds may result in the adjustment of cultural preferences and inspire changes in Chinese culture.

Chinese audiences have many choices when they choose to access cultural products via the Internet. According to uses and gratifications theory, people use the media to fulfill their needs. This means the impact of American TV series on Chinese audience could be different when they watch American TV series for different reasons. The audiences in developed countries whose culture and lifestyles are close to American culture and lifestyles may mainly seek entertainment through watching American TV series. However, audiences in developing countries, especially those that are not proficient in English, may try to satisfy their curiosity about American culture. Their different purpose for viewing American TV series could cause disparate social and cultural expectations, which may have different impacts in China compare to other nations that watch American TV.

## **1.2 The American TV mania in China**

American TV series have become a cultural symbol on Chinese video websites. When American TV series rapidly gained popularity in 2004, Chinese online video companies started to purchase streaming licenses from American TV companies. According to information from the five major Chinese video websites, Letv and iQIYI purchased 34 American series respectively, while Tencent purchased 36, Youku purchased 58, and Sohu purchased 76 American series before 1 April 2014 (iQIYI, 2014; Letv, 2014; QQ, 2014; Sohu, 2014b; Youku, 2014; Zhou, 2014c). The US produces

200 new TV series annually and Chinese video websites imported almost half of them in 2014. Major American TV fan forums in China have estimated that there are more than 24 million US TV viewers in China, based on their registered membership (Chen, 2013), which makes American television series one of the most popular sources of TV program imports in China.

Chinese video websites such as Sohu and Youku purchased streaming licenses from American TV companies. The battle for purchasing American TV programs fought by five major Chinese video websites resulted in three to four hundred American TV series making their way into China since 2010 at a total cost of nearly 200 million US dollars (Sun, 2014a). Compared with some pricey Chinese TV series, American TV series are cheaper and can attract more high-end advertisers, making it a highly profitable business (Sun, 2014a). The popularity of American TV programs is not only limited to the Internet; it has also spread to television. Reuters has reported that Chinese e-business company the Alibaba Group cooperates with Lionsgate Entertainment to provide TV streaming service for their Chinese subscribers (Carsten, 2014). This could enable Lionsgate Entertainment to reach more Chinese families through digital television distribution channels owned by the Alibaba Group (Carsten, 2014). In addition, HBO has signed a deal with Chinese Internet giant Tencent to distribute its TV series (Osawa, 2014).

Chinese audiences eagerly seek American programs because Chinese television series have been of low quality and very homogenized in their content. Fifteen thousand episodes of television series were created in China in 2013, making China one of the world's largest producers of TV series (The Hollywood Reporter, 2013). However, nearly half of them are unaired because the same few famous shows were televised by many TV stations (The Hollywood Reporter, 2013). Of those TV series that have been aired, more than 70 percent received poor audience ratings and were cancelled (Shanghai Daily, 2014). Television programs are supposed to creating images, fantasies and dreams to fulfill the needs and desires of audiences (Kim, 2003). However, the homogenization of themes such as family drama, spy drama, and costume drama, bored Chinese audiences, who criticize the lack of creativity (Workers' Daily, 2013). Family-themed TV series made up half of the TV series produced in China; other dominant TV series are espionage thrillers, legends and war sagas (Shanghai Daily, 2014).

Traditional Chinese moral codes are deeply rooted in Chinese TV series, which has led to the domination of family-themed TV series and TV series with a safe ethical orientation (Yang, 2013b). Moreover, the censorship policies applied by industry watchdogs limit the creativity of Chinese TV

series. The State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of China (SAPPRFT) demands that every television company submits the outline of each proposed TV series and only the ones that passed censorship are approved for production and broadcast. Therefore, censorship policies have become the leverage that controls the production of Chinese TV series rather than talent. The watchdog censors television programs according to their ideology, the topics, and so on. The television companies prefer the safest topics, such as family programs or history programs, as they easily pass the censors. Besides this, the government's policy of supporting certain genres has also intensified the problems. For instance, the Chinese government encourages television stations to broadcast World War Two or civil war themed television series in September, the anti-fascist commemoration month. Chinese television stations, in turn, spend a large part of their budgets to purchase these kinds of TV series.

While a substantial proportion of Chinese audiences do consume Chinese content, a growing number desire American TV and foreign television content. American TV series appeal to their audiences for four main reasons. First, American TV series rely on a well-developed television industry and a sophisticated story creation process. The innovative aspects of American television production makes US television stand out from other foreign TV programs. Visual effects that used to be seen only in Hollywood blockbuster films are commonly used in American TV series (McCabe & Akass, 2007). In addition, the engaging plots, diverse themes and intense storylines in American TV shows are attractive to Chinese audiences (Wen, 2008). Second, the desire to learn English also boosts this trend (Jiang, 2014a; Zhu, 2014). According to *China Daily*, more than 400 million Chinese, one third of the population, was studying English in the year 2000 (Na, 2010). American culture, absorbed through learning English, builds a strong cultural foundation for understanding US TV shows (Wen, 2008). Third, the popularity of the Internet has enabled Chinese audiences access to American television, which is usually through pirate streaming and downloading (Gao, 2016). Finally, the subtitles added by enthusiastic fan groups have also helped those Chinese viewers who are less proficient in English to understand the content. Subtitle groups, as they are called, are voluntary and do not make any profit from the subtitles they add.

Moreover, online viewing brings Chinese audiences into a 'supermarket' of television shows, as they are able to select shows based on their own schedule and preferences. The Internet has improved access to American television in China, resulting in the rapid growth of an American TV series fan base within a short period of time. According to Baidu Index (similar to Google Trends), the user attention index (based on the statistics of users' searches) of American TV series continued

to increase from 1,000 in 2009 to 14,000 in 2014 (Baidu Index). The Chinese video website Youku Tudou also confirmed that American TV series are the fastest growing content category in China and viewership has increased about 400 percent from 2011 to 2012 (Feng & Wang, 2014).

In addition, the increasing number of Chinese Internet users also shows the potential for increased viewing of American TV series in the future. In 2004, the year American TV series gained popularity in China, Chinese Internet users numbered 96 million, or 7.3 percent of total population (ITU, 2014). In the *Statistical Report on Internet Development in China* (China Internet Network Information Centre, 2014b), Internet use in China reached 641 million or 46 percent of the total population in 2014, meaning the penetration rate has grown by more than six times in the last decade. The number of rural Internet users is increasing and amounts to 28.2 percent of the total population of Chinese Internet users, compared with 71.8 percent of Internet users living in urban area. The number of mobile Internet users increased from 276 million in 2010 to 527 million in 2014. The number of mobile Internet users surpasses the number of personal computer users at 83.4 percent versus 80.9 percent of the total population. Moreover, the Chinese are spending more time online, as the time each Internet user spent online per week reached 25.9 hours in 2014, compared with 12.3 hours in 2004 (China Internet Network Information Centre, 2014b).

### **1.3 The reasons why Chinese audiences watch American television series**

Chinese audiences watch an increasing number of American television series for a number of reasons. The reasons for Chinese audiences' enjoyment of American television could be different from the reasons they watch local television series. Jiang (2014b) studied the Chinese viewing patterns of American, South Korean, Japanese, Hon Kong, and Taiwanese TV series and concludes that Chinese audiences watch American series for entertainment and learning. Huang (2016) studied online discussions and found that Chinese audiences watch American TV series to gain an understanding of American society, have fun, and to interact with people who share the same interests. After reviewing the literature, the findings show that most scholars agree that Chinese audiences are motivated to watch American TV series to learn English, to learn about American culture, to be entertained, to socialize with others, and to escape reality (Jiang & Leung, 2012; Wu, 2015).

Learning is one of the reasons that Chinese audiences watch American TV series, as they provide Chinese audiences with a window to the outside world, especially the Western world. Although Chinese television programs rarely portray life in other countries, viewing American television

programs online supplements this shortcoming as Western media give Chinese audiences a sense of connection with the ‘advanced’ part of the world (Xu, 2007). In the eyes of the Chinese audience, American TV series are a way to learn about the US and the outside world, as popular culture is one method of obtaining knowledge about other countries (Rosen, 2003). American culture and language are among the popular content that Chinese audiences learn through viewing American television. Therefore, Chinese audiences believe they are viewing an American middle-class lifestyle in *Desperate Housewives*, American high school life in *Gossip Girl*, and urban life in *Friends*. They believe that they are approaching the American dream, culture and the values within them (Lin, 2014b).

Like Americans, Chinese audiences watch American television for entertainment. As Chinese television cannot fully satisfy the Chinese audiences’ need for entertainment, American TV series becomes an alternative. Chinese TV has functioned as a mouthpiece<sup>1</sup> of the Communist Party of China (CPC). This means that the informative and educational functions of Chinese television have been overemphasized and its entertaining function largely ignored. However, with the development of information technology and an improved standard of living, entertainment has risen in importance (Sun & Wei, 2013). Chinese television was on the way to being entertainment-oriented about 2005 (Bai & Song, 2014). Even some national news programs, responsible for distributing official information, have amused their audience (Bai & Song, 2014).

Although Chinese television audiences enjoy these local recreational programs, the Chinese government argues that the reflection of hedonism and materialism in these programs could erode and challenge audience’s moral values. They try to stop this ‘excessive entertainment’ trend by cutbacks to TV entertainment since 2011 (Xinhua News Agency, 2011). They also promote programs that include traditional virtues and socialist core values on every channel (Xinhua News Agency, 2011).

Social interaction is another reason why Chinese audiences watch American TV series. A significant feature of American TV is its ability to attract young audiences who are familiar with Western culture and lifestyles (Yi, 2013). Chinese audiences regard American TV series as a topic in popular culture that they would like to share with their friends. Zhou (2011b) argues that the recommendation becomes one of the important reasons why Chinese college students start watching

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<sup>1</sup> Mouthpiece means propaganda agencies here. *Liberation Daily* first mentioned a newspaper as a mouthpiece in 1942. CPC expanded the mouthpiece category into newspapers, radio and television in 1981. Even today, being a mouthpiece still is an important function of Chinese television.  
Li Liangrong 2003, 'The double tracks of Chinese news media', *Modern Communication*, no. 4, pp. 1-4.



American TV series. Moreover, American television series have become a popular topic that Chinese people like to discuss on social media. EntGroup, a Chinese media research institute, published a report about the number of social media users who followed and discussed overseas TV series in 2013 (Entgroup, 2013). They find that 62.6 percent of the social media users have watched or discussed American TV series, with an even higher rate of 86.04 percent in Mtime.com and Douban.com, which are two Chinese social networking service websites and popular among college students and white-collar workers. The report also suggests that audience members who already had some knowledge about American or Western culture like to share American TV series with others.

Escape is another reason why Chinese audiences watch American TV series. This implies that people watch American dramas to indulge in another world or culture, which might facilitate adjustments to their reality or an escape from responsibilities (Jiang & Leung, 2012). Xu (2007) points out that even some Chinese programs aim to satisfy the increasing domestic petit bourgeois in urban China with images of Western lives that encourage audiences to adopt modern lifestyles. American TV series are regarded as the whole package, modeling and maintaining lifestyles to which many audiences aspire and are eager to adopt (Chan & Ma, 1996). Therefore, Chinese audiences step into a different cultural journey when they watch American TV series, giving them a chance to escape from reality and enjoy a diversified cultural experience.

The reasons why Chinese audiences choose to watch American television series can also be applied to local television series, although with different priorities. However, the different features of the audience may determine the order of these reasons. For instance, Chinese family television series often show the dramas between generations in a family, which contains more entertaining ingredients than informational television shows. Besides, the cross-cultural viewing experience offers a reference for making comparisons. Even though Chinese audiences consume American television series for learning English, recreation, sharing with friends, or indulging in another culture, it also allows them to compare Chinese culture to American culture. The different reasons why they watch television may imply various cultural expectations of Chinese and American cultures, which may also affect the impact that American television has on them.

#### **1.4 The conflicts between Chinese and American values**

Western culture and values seem more attractive to some Chinese audiences. Those in power worry that Chinese audiences could embrace American culture on the one hand and discard Chinese culture on the other (Ji, 2007). Zhang (2012) argues in his book *Discourse Power* that Chinese audiences

regard mainstream values in American TV series as universal values, because of the worldwide popularity of American TV series. As a result, some audiences even doubt or look down on their own culture and values (Zhang, 2012). In *Jiefang Daily*, Feng (2014) presents American values reflected in American TV series as having a negative influence on Chinese audiences and argues American TV series should be restricted if they are in conflict with Chinese values (Feng, 2014). In a magazine of the central CPC, Yan (2014) argues that American TV series globally disseminate American cultural values, and the dominance of these series in the world market disrupts value systems in other countries.

There are many differences in cultural values between China and the US. American TV series, as potent vehicles for the dissemination of American culture and values, lead to cultural conflicts in China. The glamorous and affluent American lifestyles, which are excessive for average Chinese, are shown in American TV series. American values that are sugar-coated in American TV series could powerfully affect Chinese audiences' minds (Weimann, 1984). Chinese cultural reporter Tan Fei argues that American TV series have had a great impact on promoting consumerism in China and they influence Chinese audiences' lifestyles and values (Zeng & Wei, 2013a). In order to fight against Western influence, the Chinese government proposed a list of core socialist values for the whole nation: prosperity, democracy, civility, harmony, freedom, equality, justice, the rule of law, patriotism, dedication, integrity, and friendship (Xinhua News Agency, 2014). These values summarize the principles of national governance and the goals of modernized China, which has also been used as slogans and a spiritual guide to unite all the citizens (Xinhua News Agency, 2013). President Xi said these values should be demonstrated in various cultural artworks (Xinhua News Agency, 2014). But these core socialist values seem too doctrinaire and too vague to be implemented by the Chinese people (Chen, 2014b; Obbema, 2015).

The Chinese government is aware of the problems of promoting traditional values. *People's Daily*, the direct mouthpiece of the CPC, points out that American TV series are good at exporting values through the portrayal of individual characters, which are more efficient at persuasion than propaganda through collective messaging (Wei, 2014). Referring to the cartoon in Figure 1.1, the Chinese characters on the sign next to the chair say, 'hundred episodes of Chinese TV series'. This implies that the Chinese authorities feel threatened by the impact of American TV series towards the local TV industry, on the one hand, and worried about its impact on Chinese traditional cultural values, on the other hand. In the Chinese news magazine *New Weekly*, Lin (2014b) refers to American TV shows using exploration in characters, technologies, aesthetics, values and lifestyles. The Chinese audience might accept new things such as one night stands, bachelor nights, pajamas

parties, women's rights, body rights, and personal privacy largely due to viewing American TV series (Lin, 2014b).

**Figure 1.1 Impact of American TV series on the Chinese TV industry (Xu, 2014)**



- Where does our audience go?
- They are watching American TV series!

(Source: Xu Pengfei, *People's Daily*, 8 April, 2014, p14)

A major side effect of watching American TV series for Chinese audiences includes the collision of American values with Chinese values; this is frequently discussed by Chinese viewers. Due to globalization and modernization, Chinese audiences are eager to interact with cultures from developed nations, which they think they could use to improve their own personal lives. Western media, and especially the American media, has become a gateway to access to these cultures. However, the question remains, to what extent can they digest and accept American cultural values as reflected in the US TV series? Most Chinese scholars assume that Chinese audiences, especially the younger generation, could understand the political views, values and ideologies in American TV shows (Xia, 2010).

### **1.5 Chinese government's censorship of American TV programs**

China's government engages in censorship due to its concerns about the political impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences. First, such shows are believed to create pressure on the party's authority and legitimacy, which has already been shaken by debate over constitutionalism and making the party subject to an overarching system of laws (Ng & Jing, 2013). Such an outcome could, it is feared, lead to the party's loss of power (Ng & Jing, 2013). Second, there is a concern that watching American TV series could weaken Chinese audiences' patriotism (Chen, 2016). A

weakening of patriotism could cause the loss of loyalty, loss of support for the government, and challenge the ruling position of the party. Third, there is concern that watching American TV series could promote American policies within the Chinese public, again endangering Chinese audiences' trust in their government and national policies (Zhang & Zheng, 2017).

To address concerns over cultural impact, the Chinese government puts strict restrictions on American TV programs. First, the Chinese government applies strict restrictions on the importation of overseas television programs. According to the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television (SAPPRFT), it is forbidden to air overseas TV series during prime time (19:00-22:00), with a quota of 25 percent during the rest of the day (SAPPRFT, 2012). Second, the government has moved all the Mandarin TV channels to Chinese satellites to manage the satellite TV reception: this prevents foreign signals from passing through satellite dishes that are used for TV reception in rural areas. Third, the Chinese government strictly controls the access to foreign TV channels in urban areas. The government forbids Chinese audiences from viewing foreign satellite TV and only approves selected overseas channels for foreigners to access (Hu, 2012). A license is necessary for a foreign TV channel to operate in China, locations are limited to expatriate hotels and office buildings (Latham, 2007). The Chinese government approved 31 foreign satellite channels, dominated by news channels, with only five channels offering movies and TV series (SAPPRFT, 2007).

Due to these restrictions, the Internet has become the main way to watch American TV programs. This is because the Internet is in a gray area for censorship and it is difficult to vet all the online videos. However, this does not mean the Chinese government has given up its intention to control the flow of American TV series into China. In December 2009, the Chinese government shut down more than 530 audio-visual service websites for lacking an Internet broadcasting license or violating copyrights (Ting, 2009). Most of these websites provided a download service for American TV programs, with some reopening after the end of the censorship period.

There are fierce debates regarding whether the Chinese government should censor American TV series. Jiang (2014c) argues that the impact of American TV series used to be small, but 'now it's gotten so huge that officials became nervous about the impact and feel compelled to do something about it'. The Chinese government officials, as mentioned, worry that Western culture online may erode Chinese culture and influence the values of Chinese people (Kluver, 2005). Four popular American TV series (*The Big Bang Theory*, *NCIS*, *The Practice*, and *The Good Wife*) on major

online video websites were cancelled due to SAPPRFT's instructions, which was taken as a sign of censorship of Internet video content. SAPPRFT required major video websites to strictly vet their content before streaming it online (Coonan, 2014). Numerous Chinese followers protested online as the ban on American TV series is 'a perceived blow against freedom of choice' (The Hollywood Reporter, 2013). SAPPRFT strengthened its censorship of American TV programs in 2015, as they ordered all video websites to submit full seasons of American TV series with subtitles for censorship to gain permits before streaming (Ling, 2016). In addition, two major subtitle sharing websites that mainly provide subtitles for American TV series were shut down at the end of 2014 (Lin, 2014a), and online video regulations set barriers to prevent Chinese audiences from accessing American TV series. The censorship of online TV programs was increased to the same standards, or even stricter standards, than those applied to Chinese television content in 2017 (Lu & Deng, 2017). Also, the promotion of traditional Chinese culture and cultural values was added to the list of censorship standards (Sina News, 2017).

## **1.6 Does the consumption of American TV series influence Chinese cultural values?**

Scholars have argued that viewing American TV could cause Americanization by disturbing the bond of tradition with the younger Chinese generation (Roberts, 2016; Yu, 2003). This impact is more profound than that of Hollywood films (Liu, 2014a), as American TV influences its audience by regular exposure instead of occasional viewing. For instance, New York City's division of travel and tourism development came to China in 2008 and found that the journalists who met them were more interested in asking about *Sex and the City* than landmarks like the Empire State Building (De Mente, 2008). Critics argue that the essence of traditional Chinese culture, such as collectivism, has been replaced by Western individualism, materialism, consumerism and other characteristics of capitalism, and claim that Chinese traditions are fading and China is in the process of cultural Westernization (Zhao, 2009).

According to some scholars, China's long history of tradition prevents changes in cultural identity (Dragga, 1999; Hunsinger, 2006; Tu, 1991). First, the traditional cultural values system, developed and nurtured throughout a long history, is solid and resists changing. Even radical Chinese intellectuals who have grown up in the Chinese culture and then lived in Western cultures for a long time still regard traditional Chinese values as extremely important to them (Du, 2013). Second, the social interaction with Chinese culture could neutralize or resist the influence of American cultural products. Chinese culture, which encompasses the social experiences of Chinese people and their

cultural values are deeply rooted (Chen, 2006). Chinese culture and its core cultural values, which define Chinese identity, are relatively unique and stable. As Bond (1986) argues, powerful traditional values in Chinese culture preserve the collective psychology of the Chinese people. In addition, it is argued that Western influences have come to China in the past but they have not changed core Chinese values; in fact, they have led to a backlash against Western influences at times. The most famous example is the Boxer rebellion (1898-1900), an anti-Western uprising in China. Formally known as The Rising of the Society of Righteous and Harmonious Fists (hence the “Boxers”), much of this movement was a reaction to the promotion of Christianity, which was thought to damage traditional Chinese culture, particularly regarding the traditional festivals, ancestor worship, and family-oriented social networks (Sun, 2008; Xiang, 2014).

A third group of scholars have argued that China is not a culturally vacant place, American television cannot influence Chinese audiences as if there is no cultural context. (Alon, 2003; Chen, 2001). However, American culture could hybridize with the Chinese culture already there (Robertson, 1995). When different cultures interact, remarkable changes in values, beliefs and behaviors occur (Naylor, 1996). However, these changes do not signify that a new value system is replacing the traditional Chinese one. It is possible that the two sets of cultural values could coexist and further integrate with each other within the Chinese culture context. In addition, American values are not always easy for Chinese audiences to understand. As reflected in US television, American values could be understood as factors that contribute to a lifestyle with high living standards, materialism and personal freedom. The glamorous images and persuasive ideas make it difficult for the audience to resist the temptation of American values. Also, the Chinese political and social environment is a combination of ingredients from the West and the East, which is helpful for the Chinese audience seeking to understand American values (Chu & Ju, 1993). Contemporary Chinese culture is described by historian Arif Dirlik as salad bowl eclecticism, with mixed cultural and social elements based on different origins (Dirlik, 1996).

The relationship between viewing American TV series and its influence on Chinese cultural identity have rarely been studied. Ware and Dupagne (1994) meta-analyzed a number of studies about the impact of American TV programs on overseas viewers from multiple countries. They found a ‘small, but statistically significant’ association between watching American entertainment television programs and the attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors of foreign audiences. Most studies have measured the effects of viewing general American television programs instead of specific genres. However, the result may be different, because news programs and dramas reflect Americans’

lifestyles and culture differently (Oliver et al., 2008).

New technology has changed the forms and patterns of media consumption and enabled researchers to update findings regarding cultivation effects on audiences (Gross, 2008). In the past, Chinese television was the only medium that Chinese audiences could use to view American TV series; but now, the Internet has replaced TV as the main medium for watching US television shows. Therefore, the impact of American TV series could be different compared with that of the TV era. As noted above, scholars have different views toward the impact of American series on Chinese audiences. Some scholars argue that viewing American TV series could be transforming Chinese culture into a melting pot (Dirlik, 1996). Others state that it is the same process of Americanization that other countries have experienced (Zhao, 2009). Cultural resistance theorists argue that viewing American TV series, on the contrary, has strengthened existing Chinese values (Schaefer et al., 2004).

Cultivation theory is one of the media effect theories concerned with the long-term effects of particular ideological representations on beliefs and values held (Gerbner et al., 2002a). According to this theory, television content nurtures the audience's ideas, attitudes, and values. However, Hall (1993) argues that an active audience may either adopt preferred, negotiated or oppositional ways to read a text, instead of passively accepting the information that media offers to them. In this way, audiences with different motives for accessing the same content could have different reaction to the media's effect. The Uses and Gratifications approach (U&G) emphasizes that active audiences choose exposure to media content based on their needs (Blumler & Katz, 1974a). Rubin (1983b) found two kinds of television users: one use TV for time consumption and entertainment, the other for information acquisition. The audience who uses television mainly for entertainment have different expectations from those who use television for information acquisition, which may influence their willingness to accept the values.

## **1.7 Research questions**

Since the Chinese government has had concerns about the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences, they have tackled the Western influence by imposing restrictions on American content and promoting traditional Chinese culture on Chinese campuses (Hannah, 2016; Liu & Wu, 2015; Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2014; Zhong, 2017). This study aims to clarify the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences' cultural values and identity. It aims to give indications about the influence of American culture on Chinese audiences, and also contribute to understanding the interactional dynamic between Chinese and American culture within

a Chinese context. This study could provide to be a useful reference for policy makers in China when developing culture policies in the future, especially regarding foreign media content.

This study seeks to answer a number of questions:

- How do Chinese and American TV series reflect cultural realities and values?
- Do individual and societal firewalls limit the impact of American TV series?
- Does viewing American TV series affect the Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural realities and values?
- How do Chinese viewers seeking different gratifications from viewing American TV series differ in their perceptions of cultural values?

## **1.8 Research gaps and practical implications**

This study tests the presumption regarding the claim that American TV series impact Chinese audiences and clarifies the cultural foundation the assumption has been built on. The studies that relate to the impact of American TV series in China rarely examine the differences between Chinese TV series and American TV series regarding values, even though the researches presume that there are distinguishing differences in values between Chinese and American cultural products (Han, 2009; Lin, 2013; Liu, 2015; Liu & Liu, 2011). This study expands the research by examining the differences in values that Chinese audiences identify from Chinese TV series and American TV series.

This study aims to find out whether there is a link between viewing American TV series and the weakening of traditional cultural values in China. Many Chinese scholars have studied the impact of American TV series from the perspective of cultural imperialism, which has argued in support of a relationship between viewership and the erosion of traditional Chinese values (Huang, 2016; Wu, 2015; Zhang & Harwood, 2002; Zhou, 2011a). However, this approach falls short in explaining the popularity of American TV series in China as the audiences voluntarily watch through unofficial distribution methods (Gao, 2016). Chinese audiences seek out and initiate viewing activity even when American TV series are not imported to China, debunking the cultural imperialism claim. This study seeks to assess the relevance of communication theories in relation to this issue, including works of firewall model, cultivation, and uses & gratifications.

There are societal and individual firewalls between American TV series and Chinese audiences, which may limit the impact of American TV series on the Chinese viewers' cultural values. The



societal firewalls include government censorship and restrictions on American TV series; these could limit Chinese audiences' access to American TV series. Individual firewalls, such as barriers to understanding American culture, could also hinder Chinese audiences' perceptions of American cultural values. There are Chinese researchers who report the specific features of Chinese audiences of American TV series (Luo, 2006; Wen, 2008; Yi, 2013), but it is rare to see the studies explain the reason for these features. Societal and individual firewalls have created a barrier to accessing and understanding American TV series by Chinese audiences. This has restricted the impact of American TV series to an audience group with some common features. By adopting the firewall model, this study could explain why the Chinese audience of American TV series is limited to a certain group of people.

There are relatively few studies that look at the cultivation impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences, in spite of the fact that China has the largest television audience in the world. In recent years, some scholars believe the popularity of American television in China reflects the shift of cultural power between the two countries. The reason for Chinese audiences consuming American television may not just be personal taste. The impact of American television series could involve more than the way American culture is perceived, and go deeper into the cultural identity and values of Chinese audiences.

This study examines the relevance of cultivation effects in a Chinese context and expands the research to an online environment. Previous studies on cultivation theory were mainly based on television media. This study retested those claims in relation to online video viewers. Most studies have paid little attention to the relationship between watching American TV series and the Chinese audience's perceptions of American values, and instead attempt to link between watching American TV series and Chinese audience's perception of Chinese values. But it is the basic assumption of cultivation theory that the more American TV series that Chinese audiences consume, the more likely they are to favor American values. Therefore, this study fills a research gap by examining the differences between heavy viewers and light viewers, and long-term viewers and short-term viewers of American TV series in relation to their perception of American values.

The motives for watching American TV series are an important potential moderating factor regarding the effects that the media have on audiences (Blumler, 1979; Krcmar & Strizhakova, 2009). The motives of watching television are amplified in an online environment as viewers have more freedom to choose what they want to watch compared to what is available on Chinese

television. This study contributes to the literature by considering the motives of watching American TV series as a variable. Most research on audiences chooses either a cultivation or a U&G approach, in order to distinguish the orientation between the standpoint of passive and active audiences, but rarely focuses on the connection between them. This study examines both the cultivation and the U&G approaches to study the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences.

## **1.9 Outline of the thesis**

Chapter One presents a brief background regarding American television series and their potential impact on Chinese audiences. American television series bring images, cultural messages, language, and values that usually express a television version of modern life more intense than that found in the current Chinese social landscape (Fung & Ma, 2014). With the growing popularity of American TV series in China, the possible effect of American TV series on the cultural identity of Chinese audiences is investigated in this chapter. This chapter also introduces the key research questions of this dissertation and outlines some of the research gaps in the literature that the study attempts to address.

Chapter Two provides a historical review of the distribution of American TV series in China. It examines distribution models of American TV series and the characteristics of the Chinese audiences who watch American TV series. It also examines the Chinese media environment over this timeline. The Chinese media system is different from many other countries due to their function as a mouthpiece of the CPC and the censorship imposed by Chinese government. The remarkable changes in the media landscape since 1980, the year that American TV series first broadcast in China, are discussed.

Chapter Three highlights three contending theoretical frameworks that explore the consequences of cross-cultural communication in the online media era. These theories are: cultivation theory, the firewall model of cosmopolitan communications, and U&G theory. They are relevant to this study because cultivation theory and U&G theory are two significant approaches for studying the impact of American TV series conducted on Chinese audiences. The firewall model explains the societal and individual barriers that hinder the consequences of cross-cultural communication. In order to show the potential changes in Chinese audiences' values system that result from viewing American television series, the study identifies and explains different Chinese and American cultural values from a review of the literature on cultural values.

Chapter Four gives an account of the methods and principles that guide this research and discusses the design of the research methods. This chapter focuses on the research methods that best fit this study and how to use them to answer the research questions. This study adopts a “mixed methods” approach by uses a content analysis, an online survey, a quasi-experiment, and in-depth interviews to triangulate the findings.

Chapter Five reviews the results from the content analysis. This chapter focus on comparing the difference between the audiences of Chinese TV series and American TV series in relation to identified cultural values. Comments on different social websites are used to explore the cultural values that Chinese audiences identified from American TV series and Chinese TV series. The Chinese audiences’ attitude towards American values and Chinese values are also explored.

Chapter Six highlights the findings of the online survey and examines the differences in cultural values between Chinese non-viewers and viewers, heavy and light viewers, long-term and short-term viewers of American TV series. This study also tests Chinese perceptions of American reality from watching television. Moreover, this chapter discusses viewers’ perception of Chinese reality and specifically whether watching American TV series could influence their perceptions about China’s economy, society, culture, and self-esteem.

Chapter Seven discuss the results of the quasi-experiment. It aims to detect any changes in the Chinese audiences’ perceptions of cultural values before and after they watch each American TV series. Although, theoretically, cultivation effects should take a few years to appear, cognition of cultural values may not actually take very long. Audiences could identify American cultural values and adjust their attitude towards cultural values as a result of viewing American TV series. The audiences could indicate the direction of the long-term change by showing the adjustment of value perceptions both during the experiment and within the following six months.

Chapter Eight analyses the findings from the in-depth interview and offers qualitative insights to add depth to the quantitative findings in the previous chapters. Moreover, this chapter utilizes the quantitative findings to present a fuller picture of the value internalization process that results from viewing American TV series. The findings explain the reason why the viewers of American TV series are mainly young audiences. Chapter Eight also explores the different stages of the value cognition process through viewing American TV series.

Chapter Nine concludes the thesis by summarizing the findings and discussing the theoretical contributions of this dissertation. This chapter summarizes the approaches used in the theoretical framework to understand the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese cultural identity and values. This chapter also states the limitations of the study and provides some recommendations for future studies.

## **Chapter 2 The American television landscape in China**

“China is engaged in a soft-power war with America and the West. America may not have noticed this, but China has. While America takes its soft power around the world for granted, China struggles to win even the ‘hearts and minds’ of its own citizens.” (Eades, 2014)

-- Mark C. Eades, an American writer and educator based in Shanghai

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the history and distribution models of American TV series in China. To illustrate the popularity of American TV series in China, this chapter starts by highlighting the models of distributing US television in China. In addition, this chapter also reviews existing studies about the features of Chinese audiences of American TV series. Moreover, it emphasizes the distinctive distribution model of American TV series in China by comparing it to distribution models in other countries.

The chapter begins by review the history of American TV in China and presents the progressive changes in the American TV landscape in China. It starts by illustrating the situation of Chinese television before 1980, when China was void of American TV series. After this period, the Chinese television industry experienced rapid growth, which created a need for more content to fill its schedule. Therefore, Chinese TV stations imported content from other countries, including the US. However, US television appeared to not conform to Chinese social realities and the dominant socialist ideology at that time. The Chinese government was worried about the influence of American TV on Chinese audiences. Therefore, the government imposed restrictions and censorship on US television shows. However, due to advancements in information and communication technologies (ICTs), especially the Internet, the Chinese media landscape has experienced a rapid change. Because of this change, American TV series continued to gain popularity among Chinese audiences.

The distribution models reviewed in this chapter highlight the distinctive differences of content flow in the television-dominated era and the online media era. In the television-dominated period (1980-

2000), Chinese television stations controlled the distribution of American TV shows. Chinese audiences appear to have passively accepted the content broadcast to them, as they did not have many choices. However, in the online media era (2010-today), the power has shifted from the television stations to the Chinese audiences. This means that the audiences can choose the content to watch and make viewing schedules that suit them. The content providers, video websites and subtitle groups value the feedback from their audiences. These changes provide strong support for the study of media effects (Shehata et al., 2013), as the online media provides audiences with an unprecedentedly large amount of content and convenience in television consumption.

The audience studies section in this chapter describes the general characteristics of the Chinese audiences who watch American TV series. Understanding the characteristics of these audiences helps us to understand the societal and individual firewalls of American TV series in China. These firewalls are the factors that shape the characteristics of the audience group.

The global distribution section compares the distribution model of American TV series in China with models in other countries, and highlights the Chinese online distribution model. The strong censorship of traditional TV content and the relatively weak online censorship (or technical impossibility of censoring all online videos) has led to the online distribution of American TV series in China. This Chinese distribution model is different from the models in other countries.

## **2.2 The distribution of American TV series in China**

The Chinese television industry was underdeveloped and television was mainly used for propaganda before 1980, the year when the first American TV series were brought to China. When China started television broadcasting in 1958, it had only two TV stations: Beijing TV (renamed as China Central Television in 1978) and Shanghai TV (Hong, 1993). Even during the 1970s, there were only 30 television stations in China (Zhuang, 1984) and only the Party elites could afford television (Sun, 2010). China experienced ten years of Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976; during this time TV was heavily laden with the CPC's propaganda for mass mobilization using dogmatic tones, artless style and poor quality (Huang & Yu, 1997). Even television series functioned as propaganda for the Party (Bai, 2007). Local TV series were highly stereotypical and formulaic, and mainly taught political lessons to the audience (Ma, 2014a). Most imported television content was from socialist countries and exchanges with 'Western capitalist countries' were minimal (Huang & Yu, 1997).

However, Chinese economic reforms and the consequent social and cultural transformations changed the television audience and cracked the Party's domination of TV series (Ma, 2014a). In the 1980s, the Chinese television industry experienced a significant change whereby the number of television stations and TV owners grew rapidly. From 1983 to 1988, the number of television stations increased from 52 to 422. An additional 811 transmitting stations and relay stations have since been constructed (Hong, 1993). This, however, led to a problem: Chinese TV stations did not have enough shows to air in the early 1980s (Wen, 2013). Therefore, China started importing TV shows and dramas from other countries such as Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, the US, Brazil, and Britain (Wen, 2013) and scheduled them for Chinese broadcasts.

Before American TV series crept into China and grew in popularity, Chinese audiences barely knew what the Western world looked like. Between 1949 and 1979, China was void of American television programs because they were prohibited from being broadcast (Chu & Ju, 1993). The Chinese government lifted the ban after conducting economic reforms in 1978. Consequently, Chinese authorities carefully screened American TV programs before they were presented to Chinese audiences. The selection standards for American television shows was based on whether the show conformed to the dominant ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics at that time and offered the Chinese audiences an alluring vision of modernity and the market economy, which the government wanted to achieve.

Chinese culture was at a cross-road when American TV series came to China. During the reign of Chairman Mao Zedong<sup>2</sup>, the Chinese people, inspired by his idealistic concept of a Communist utopia and propelled by his charismatic leadership, participated in a prolonged and traumatic process of radical social transmission (Chu & Ju, 1993). For the first time in history, traditional Chinese culture was forced to undergo major changes of unprecedented dimensions, all within a short span of decades (Chu & Ju, 1993). Political communication played a major part in the change process. In the 1950s, the Party started a series of ideological campaigns to attack traditional cultural values and beliefs that culminated in 1966 with the Cultural Revolution as its traumatic climax. Mao wanted to eliminate the old to establish a new set of Communist-inspired ideologies. Highly restrictive ideological confines came to dominate the economic, social and political life of China for three decades. However, Mao's strategy left a significant impact on Chinese culture with the suppression of the traditional culture. The Chinese were left with an ideology that was imposed top-

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<sup>2</sup> Mao Zedong, the founding father of the People's Republic of China, which he governed as Chairman of the Communist Party of China from its establishment in 1949 until his death in 1976.

down until the arrival of a new ideology from the West in the early 1980s, when Deng Xiaoping introduced his economic reforms (Whyte, 1989).

As popularly perceived by Chinese people, Western ideology is not a set of clearly articulated principles and standards. Rather, it presents a lifestyle of unmistakable affluence, marked by a high standard of material comfort and a remarkable degree of personal freedom that Chinese audiences have seen in American films and television programs (Chu & Ju, 1993). This lifestyle is associated with words like ‘capitalism’ and ‘democracy’, even though few Chinese understand how capitalism works in the United States or how democracy is practiced in the West. It is, nevertheless, an ideology because it consists of captivating images and powerful ideas. What seems to have vividly impressed Chinese people is a sharp contrast between what they see around them in their own lives and what they see on their television screens. This new Western ideology, imprecise and unclear as it may seem, entered Chinese society in the context of an ideological vacuum, as it were, and found an audience, especially among the young, at a moment when they were particularly vulnerable to its influence (Chu & Ju, 1993). This influence was difficult to resist because its validity seemed well-established by what the Chinese people could see on television; whether it corresponded to reality did not seem to matter.

Accompanying this trend, American TV series displayed a culture that Chinese people could never have imagined. The symbols of modern life such as cars, Coca Cola, telephones, family houses, fashions, and fast food were brought into China by American TV series (Wen, 2013). Compared with overly dramatic and fictional Hong Kong TV series, American TV series seemed more realistic, including many real life desires (Wen, 2013). Although the themes and lifestyle reflected in American TV series were foreign to Chinese audiences at that time, the audiences were attracted by the image of a wealthy and developed society with high technologies and abundant merchandise (Wen, 2013).

The Chinese government was determined to ensure that the exotic culture of international programming would not inspire thoughts that deviated from the dominant national ideology, which was socialism with Chinese characteristics (Brown, 2012). The ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics is based upon socialism but also emphasizes Chinese traditional culture as the spiritual basis for the realization of national rejuvenation (The State Council of China, 2017). Socialist values and traditional cultural values therefore became the standard used for censoring foreign cultural products (SAPPRFT, 2017). The approved TV series mainly depict the values that



the government of China wants to show. For instance, TV series imported from Japan have mostly depicted the bitterness of the Japanese people towards their government after World War II, which was seen as evidence that the war was evil and served as education about patriotism (Igarashi, 2004; Wen, 2013). The circumscribed content was used as references to promote the ideology advocated by the government.

### **2.2.1 Distribution model: from linear model to multi-level model**

The broadcast of American TV shows in China has significantly changed during the last three decades: the medium shifted from TV to the Internet; the sender shifted from TV stations to subtitle groups and video websites; Chinese-dubbed broadcasting transformed to nearly synchronous streaming with subtitles. Different distribution models for American TV series in China from 1980 until today are discussed below.

#### **2.2.1.1 Linear distribution model in the television-dominant period (1980-2000)**

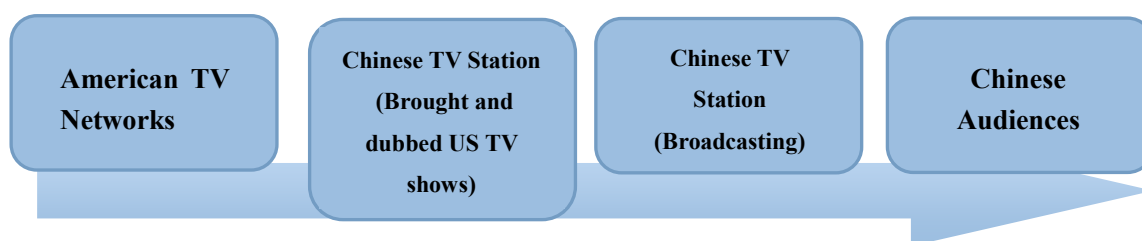
The television-dominant period of American TV series distribution traces back to 1980. The Chinese government established diplomatic relations with the US in 1979. As a cultural exchange project, China Central Television (CCTV) brought the American National Broadcasting Company (NBC) science-fiction series *The Man from Atlantis* to China in 1980, and this was recorded as the first American TV series ever broadcast on Chinese television. NBC cancelled this show after one season due to its bad ratings. However, it became a big hit in China. The sunglasses of the main male character, Mark Harris, became a fashion symbol at that time (Sun, 2014a). Even today, its influence on that generation can be seen in Chinese nostalgic television series (Zeng & Wei, 2013a).

The communication model for American TV series in this period was linear (see Figure 2.1). In this process, the audience was a passive receiver; they could not choose the content and their feedback rarely influenced the programming of television stations. When CCTV cancelled the American TV show *Garrison's Gorillas*, hundreds of viewers wrote letters to the television station to ask for the show to be brought back, although it never happened (Wang, 2012).

In the television-dominant era, television stations led the distribution process. The Chinese TV stations made initial plans to import American TV series based on audience ratings in the US and other countries (Pan, 2010). They asked the review team to grade each television program on its reflection of ideology, culture, and societal needs (Pan, 2014). This censorship process was compulsory and required by the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and

Television of China (SAPPRFT). After passing the review, TV stations would submit the television series with comments and introductions to SAPPRFT. Only those that passed the censor could be aired on television, but, the violence, sex and other ‘unhealthy’ scenes were cut out to make sure the audiences watched a ‘clean’ version (Liu, 2014b). The audiences were powerless in this process and their feedback could not influence the decision of television stations.

**Figure 2.1 The distribution model of American TV programs during the television-dominant period**



When Chinese TV stations brought American TV programs, they did the secondary processing. The editor could cut scenes, adjust the lines or even change the meaning in translation to meet the censorship standards (Zhi, 2012). Although re-editing could sometimes break the story line, the fresh cultural experience compensated for the broken story lines.

From the beginning, the Chinese government assumed that American TV series would have a strong influence on Chinese audiences (Li, 2013; Zhang, 2014). They linked the American TV show, *Garrison's Gorillas*, with the security crackdown in big cities (Wang, 2012). *Garrison's Gorillas*, broadcast in China from October 1980, shows the diverse personalities of the main characters and expressed the humorous side of Americans. All the fighters in this show had their own defects, but their defects made the characters believable and realistic. At that time, Chinese audiences were used to the hero images in Soviet films, such as *Lenin in 1918* and Chinese war films, but *Garrison's Gorillas* gave them a different type of heroism. The Chinese government thought this type of heroism and its key word ‘Gorillas’ or ‘Guerrilla’ (translated into Chinese as 加里森敢死队 Ganshidui, which means suicide squad) had a connection with social unrest in China at that time (Wang, 2008). China confronted its biggest unemployment rate in 1979, with 20 million urban dwellers unemployed. According to a report from Beijing, the crime rate was rising; numerous young people were stuck in financial difficulties and they were desperate (Wang, 2008). Watching *Garrison's Gorillas* gave the unemployed young a forum in which to relax their minds; journalists reported that young people imitated the scenes in this TV series such as copycat burglaries committed by bandits; and college students smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol for fun, which

was thought to have been influenced by this TV series (Wang, 2012). This series only aired 16 of the 26 episodes in China because a sociological study at that time showed that it was having a negative influence on young Chinese people (Wang, 2012). This incident inspired the Chinese government to ban foreign television content (Wang, 2012) and national television CCTV stopped import American TV series until 1990, when a few local TV stations started broadcasting American TV series (Wu, 2014). In that year, Shanghai TV made a contract with a US TV production company and imported four TV series per year, including a Chinese dubbed version of *Growing Pains* (Cai, 2013). The American way of parenting in this show attracted lots of Chinese viewers and made it a big hit for several years (Cai, 2013). The show also brought the concept of the sitcom to China for the first time; gaining popularity among Chinese families (Guangzhou Daily, 2007). The Chinese actress who dubbed the voice of the mother, Maggie, in that show said the people around her always asked her for information about *Growing Pains* during its four years of being broadcast in China (Guangzhou Daily, 2007).

After *Growing Pains*, Chinese television aired more American TV series including *Hunter*, *Falcon Crest*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Moonlighting*, and *Knight Rider* with Chinese dubbing. Audiences in coastal areas could also watch original American TV series on Hong Kong TV channels, such as Pearl TV, with Chinese subtitles. The American sitcom *Friends* was one of the most popular TV shows at the end of the 1990s (Ku, 2009). Pearl TV broadcast dozens of sitcoms every week and nurtured a large number of loyal American TV fans in Chinese coastal areas (Cao, 2013).

In conclusion, Chinese audiences had limited ways to access American TV programs from the 1980s to the 1990s. However, the rapid growth of Chinese television stations meant that they needed to import more overseas television content to fill their television schedules. Although TV stations only broadcasted a few hours a day, and the audiences had to watch whatever was broadcast on their television, a TV series could become popular overnight (Hunan TV, 2008). Thus, even though only a small number of American TV series were broadcast in China, they could influence a large number of Chinese viewers.

#### **2.2.1.2 Linear distribution model in the transition period (2001-2009)**

In the late 1990s, the Chinese government introduced strict policies and censored overseas TV series. According to the policies, foreign TV series were only allowed 25 percent of the TV series airtime and could only be aired after 22:00 (Wen, 2009). SAPPRFT, the Chinese media management department, tightened the foreign television importation policy and took back the importation

licenses of overseas TV series from Shanghai television in 2000 (Lin, 2007). As a result, Chinese television stations preferred to import South Korean or Japanese TV shows, which passed the censors more easily than the American shows (Wen, 2009). American TV series therefore encountered distribution obstacles in China.

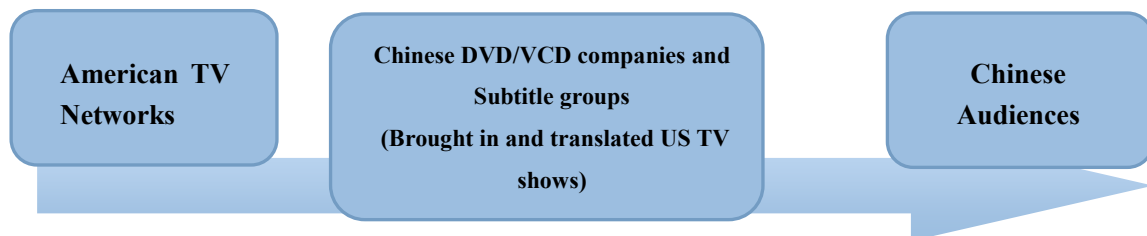
As Digital Video Disc (DVD) players became a common device in Chinese homes, audiences started to catch up on American TV through Video Compact Discs (VCDs) and Digital Video Discs (DVDs). Compared to television, the censorship on DVD content was weak (Cai, 2013). At that time, US TV shows such as *The West Wing* and *Band of Brothers* gained a reputation among Chinese audiences. DVD distribution has some access limitations in a larger population because the update speed is very slow, so audiences have to wait for a long time to acquire the newest season (Cai, 2013). However, during this period, Chinese audiences adapted to watching original TV series with Chinese subtitles instead of dubbing.

During the later transition period, DVDs became less popular with audiences due to the advent of the Internet; Chinese audiences started to watch American TV series such as the FOX show *24* online through downloading resources provided by subtitle groups (Cai, 2013). These American TV series resources were believed to have been recorded in the US and uploaded to the Chinese Internet by the members of subtitle groups who live in the United States (Wu, 2011). The downloaded online American TV shows were also burned onto DVDs and sold by pirate DVD vendors, who provided the TV shows for viewers without Internet access (Zhang, 2014). With the increasing demand for US television shows, fan communities and subtitle groups were established to develop subtitles (Zhu, 2014). It is believed that online American TV fan communities came into existence in 2003 (Chen, 2014a). In that year, *Friends* became one of the most popular TV shows in China and fans established an online forum, F6, for discussion. This is said to be the earliest online forum for American TV in China (Zhu, 2014). From then on, the fans' forums grew even larger with the increasing popularity of American TV series. The subtitle translators were divided into different teams, and they were called subtitle groups, each with their own websites (Sun, 2014b).

Although the interaction between distributors and audiences strengthened in the transition period, the distributors still dominated the process by bringing in the American series. Due to the limited DVD/VCD distribution networks and the early stage of the streaming/downloading technologies, the audiences did not have a great deal of power to negotiate the content. The distribution model of American TV series was a linear process with minimal audience influence during this transition

period (see Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2 The distribution model of American TV program during the transition period**



The Chinese government acknowledges the existence of subtitle groups, and regards them as playing a complementary role in knowledge diffusion in the Internet era (Chen, 2011) according to *People's Daily*, the direct voice of the CPC. Howard W. French (2006) stated in *The New York Times* that Chinese subtitle groups make American popular culture available in near-real time and provide subtitles for free to Chinese audiences. Subtitle-making groups are volunteers and do not have any commercial motives. Chinese fans of American TV have established hundreds of subtitle groups, such as *The Last Fantasy* (TLF), *Yi Dian Yuan* (YDY, which means 'Eden'), *Ying Yin English TV shows* (YYeTs), *Feng Ruan* (FR, which means 'soft wind'), and *Ragbear*. Their volunteer work shortened the time lag for watching American TV series in China. Chinese audiences could watch a new episode of an American TV series with Chinese subtitles within six hours after it was aired on American TV networks (Liu, 2014c). The subtitle groups provided numerous American TV shows with accessible subtitles and a download service for online viewers.

However, when an American TV series grows in popularity on the Internet, its popularity does not spread to television due to restricted access. Even popular American TV shows such as *Friends* did not pass government censorship because some of the content conflicted with mainstream ideology in China. The deputy director of CCTV's international center, Ming Qing, points out that *Friends* is a TV series about friendship, but the audience can find sex talk in every episode; the show's attitude toward sex cannot be accepted by general audiences (Yuan et al., 2014). He also mentioned that, unlike American TV series, when importing South Korean TV series there was no need to worry about this kind of problem because China and South Korean share the same moral and cultural values (Shanghai Morning Post, 2004). Chinese national TV channel CCTV-8 aired another television series, *Band of Brothers*, because it had a patriotic theme (China Economic Net, 2009)

that conformed to Chinese mainstream ideology (Beijing Youth Daily, 2003). This meant that the importation of an overseas television series was dependent on its ideology, not demand from the Chinese audience (Kops & Ollig, 2007).

The Internet replaced television and became the main channel for accessing American TV series in 2003 (Guan, 2009). Chinese television stations also imported some American TV series at that time, but the performance of these shows was not good. For instance, CCTV aired American TV shows such as *Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Desperate Housewives* and *Grey's Anatomy*, but in contrast to their popularity on the Internet, audience ratings of these shows was very low (Hu, 2007). This may have been because CCTV cut out many scenes that involved sex and violence to meet the censors' requirements, but this disrupted the plots and confused the television audiences. Furthermore, the Chinese dubbing sounds like reading instead of acting, which killed the humor (Wang, 2010). Besides this, the Chinese government had not launched a TV rating system yet and they required TV content to be suitable for general audiences, which includes children. This meant that it was difficult for American TV series to pass the censors, and this explains why web-based viewing became the major way to access American TV programs.

Furthermore, the Internet gave Chinese audiences more freedom to watch American TV series. The Chinese people could freely stream or download their favorite American TV shows. Most of these digital resources were pirated (Yang & Tao, 2010; Zeng & Wei, 2013b). This led to some legal concerns, but most Chinese view it as a mere technicality because these websites charge nothing for their efforts and make no profits, which does not violate Chinese laws (French, 2006). However, the Chinese government began to regulate Internet content, which led SAPPRT to shut down more than 500 video sharing websites at the end of 2009 (Wu, 2009).

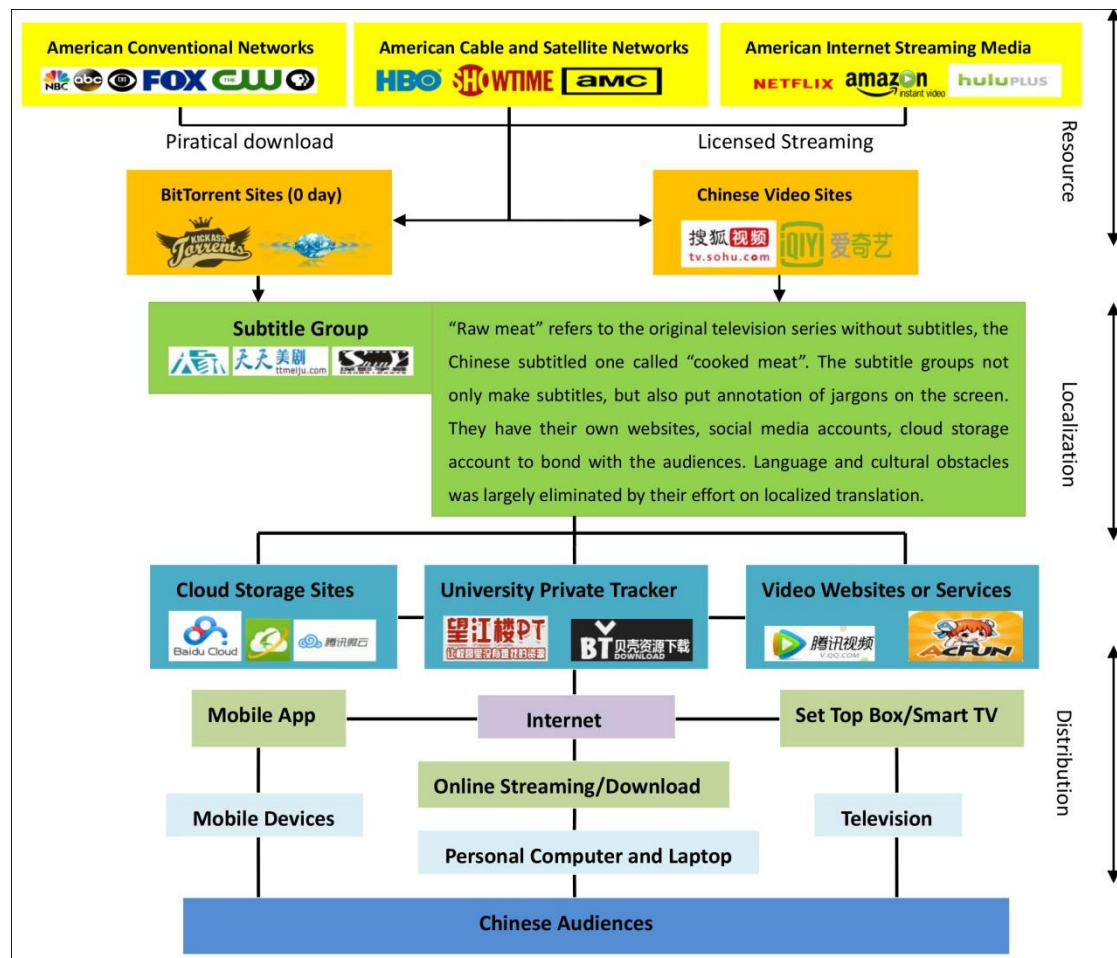
### **2.2.1.3 Multi-level distribution model in the online streaming period (2010-today)**

With the advancement in information technologies and the availability of broadband over the Internet, China stepped into the Internet era at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Peng, 2005). Compared to television, the Internet is diversified in its access devices and flexible in regulatory policies. The Internet is accessed by mobile devices and other devices like desktop computers. In this context, traditional television is threatened by shift in audiences to Internet videos over the internet (China Communication Research Centre, 2011).

With this transition, the linear flow of American TV series in China was replaced by a multi-level flow (Zhang, 2013b). The multi-level distribution model of American TV series in the online streaming period is shown as Figure 2.3. After American TV series are broadcast on American TV networks, 0-day group and video sites release the videos without subtitles, which they call 'raw meat'. '0-day group' refers to the group that distribute American television shows the same day that they air on American TV networks (Gehring, 2004). The 0-day group members have recorded and uploaded American TV series, and this allows visitors to their website from around the world to search for and download these TV series. The Chinese video sites provide the opportunity to view licensed American TV series, and they also allow their viewers to upload and share American TV series. Subtitle groups assign the new American TV series to their members to make Chinese subtitles. Then they upload and distribute the video with Chinese subtitles, which they call 'cooked meat', to different online forums, video websites, and online storage sites. Subtitle groups have their own websites and social media, which are the main resources for the Chinese audience to get information about American TV shows. As a next step, Chinese audiences download or stream the latest episode of an American TV series via television, computer, or mobile devices. The content distribution in the online media era is often more 'grass roots'. Besides receiving content, audiences also share American television series with other viewers through cloud storage systems or university private networks. Audiences also share their comments and their feedback directly with content distributors, which helps them decide whether to continue updating the shows. The power center of this multiple-level distribution model has shifted from television stations to the Chinese audience.

The multi-level flow of American TV series in China has three features. First, multiple American television resources have converged and formed a viewing style similar to that on Netflix. Second, information flows are multi-directional and open-ended. Each participant in this process is a part of the distribution chain and could be both a sender and a receiver as the viewers could also distribute their favorite American TV series through different online platforms. Third, this model is not limited to niche communications among American culture lovers; rather, the model combines interpersonal communication (audiences recommending American television and interacting with each other), group communication (organized groups cooperate and interact with each other during distribution), and mass communication (the media convergence broadened the distribution).

**Figure 2.3 The distribution model of American TV series via the Internet in China**



The multi-level distribution model raises a number of copyright issues. As shown in Figure 2.3, Chinese audiences can watch all the American TV series available through unofficial platforms. Copyright issues have always overlapped with censorship and even used as camouflage for government censorship. Pirated American TV shows (i.e., no license fees were paid) that were made available for free downloading and streaming became the major way to watch American TV series for several reasons. First, the Chinese criminal law only considers the distribution of TV series for profit as a violation of copyright (The Supreme People's Court of China, 2015). Most of the unofficial distribution of American TV series is made through non-profit organizations and for English and culture learning purposes, which are not considered to be a violation of the copyright. Chinese video service providers only block the pirated content after receiving a notice from American TV companies or associations, such as the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) (Brzeski, 2017). Second, the Chinese government has imposed strict restrictions on foreign



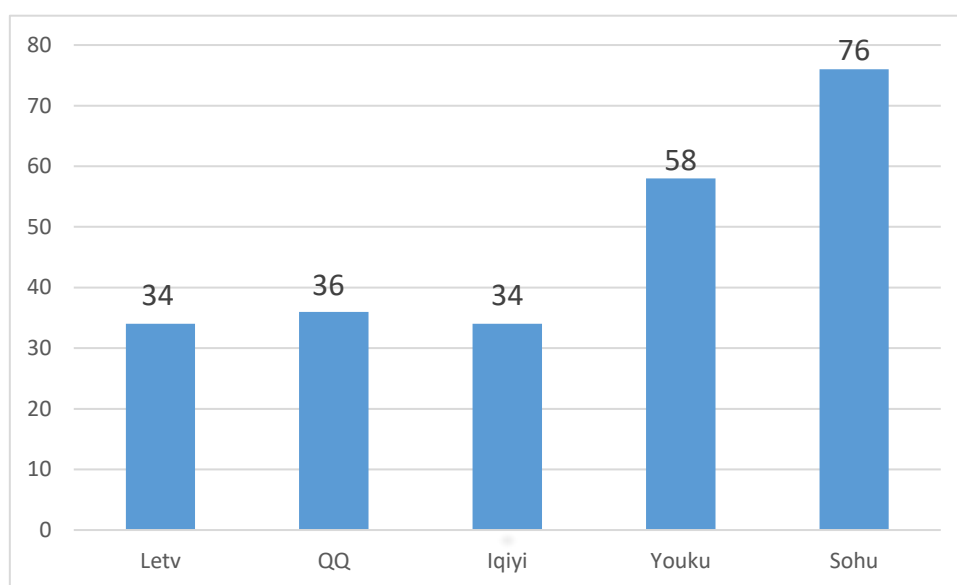
content on Chinese video websites. According to the American Chamber of Commerce in China (AmCham China), SAPPRFT announced in 2014 that foreign content must be restricted to 30 percent of each video website's total offerings; this restriction effectively limited American content to 12 percent of all streamed content (The American Chamber of Commerce in China, 2016). Third, the Chinese government has applied strict censorship on the content of official video websites since 2012. The censorship rules include political orientation, value orientation, and traditional culture orientation (Xinhua News Agency, 2014; SAPPRFT, 2016, 2017; China Netcasting Services Association, 2012, 2017). As a result, many overseas TV series was removed from Chinese video websites, which pushed viewers to use unofficial platforms. Moreover, even licensed American TV series are facing censorship, such as *Game of Thrones*, with scenes of sex and violence being removed. Two episodes of *The Blacklist* concerning Chinese spies were not allowed to be shown, even though Chinese audiences thought these actions damaged the story lines (Li & Feng, 2014; Zhang, 2016).

American TV companies have recognized that their programs are not easily available to Chinese viewers on either traditional media or online media due to Chinese government restrictions (The American Chamber of Commerce in China, 2011, 2016). As such, they often turn a blind eye regarding copyright issues with unofficial American content distributors such as subtitle groups, as they still prefer a means to enter the Chinese market and gain free publicity (Vice, 2017). Fourth, the Chinese government requires that all providers of Internet audio-visual services obtain a permit (SAPPRFT, 2016). The applicant for the permit must be state-owned or state-controlled and have 20 million Chinese Yuan (about three million USD) of registered capital (SAPPRFT, 2016). These provisions make it impossible for overseas platforms that provide American TV series to come to China. Last but not least, Chinese audiences are getting accustomed to watching online content for free, as most Chinese TV series are streamed for free with commercials; Chinese audiences will need time to accept the business model of paying to watch TV on the Internet (Li, 2016). Due to these factors, most Chinese viewers use unofficial methods to access American TV series.

In the process of transition to online viewing, Chinese audiences have gained more power. The Internet enables audiences to schedule shows based on their time preferences. The multi-level distribution with cultural annotations and localized subtitles has weakened the barriers of language and culture. American TV shows have shifted from the franchise of a small group to a mass communication phenomena.

In response to the popularity of American shows, Chinese online video companies, despite the restrictions mentioned earlier and popularity of unofficial sources, have nonetheless purchased the online streaming licenses from the American TV companies since 2010. As shown in figure 2.1, five major Chinese video websites bought 34-76 American TV series. As a result of the increasing number of loyal fans, Hollywood studios gained solid profits from China (Yang, 2013a). According to *Oriental Daily*, the price Chinese video streaming website Sohu paid for one episode of *The Big Bang Theory* was around 150,000 US dollars in 2010 (Luo, 2011). In 2013, Sohu raised its budget to 80 million US dollars to purchase various American TV series. Tencent, one of the biggest Chinese IT companies, developed a new importation plan for one thousand episodes of American TV series, even when the price increased 15 percent per year (Zhao, 2013).

**Figure 2.4 The licenses of the American TV series owned by Chinese video websites (Zhou 2014b)**



Chinese video websites enable their viewers to order new American TV shows. The video websites send their correspondents to screening meetings of the American TV series in Los Angeles to pre-order the new shows. They put trailers of the new series online to let their viewers vote for shows that they would like to watch (see Figure 2.6). This voting process enables the audiences to engage in content screening, which emphasizes the needs of the audiences and minimizes the influence of government censorship. Meanwhile, the revenue of the video websites comes mainly from advertisements, and the large number of viewers enables them to negotiate a better price with advertisers.

Streaming online has become the most popular way to watch American TV series in China (Chen, 2010; Li, 2013). As Gillan (2011) stated, television is now online as much as it is 'on-air', and audiences watch TV on their computers, laptops, cell phones, and other mobile devices. TV series were transformed into a franchise which is on-air, online, and on-mobile; and all of these were created at the same time and combined by trans-media marketing and storytelling (Gillan, 2011). The multiple-access devices paved the way for Chinese audiences to watch American television, which made American TV series one of the most important sources of content on Chinese video websites.

Bullet curtain websites (弹幕网站 in Chinese) also promote the distribution of American TV series in China. The popularity of bullet curtain websites is equal to that of YouTube in the US. Bullet curtain websites are video websites that stream the comments of the audience on the screen with the video itself. These websites use their strengthened social function and American TV series as important content to attract viewers. Although other video websites have comments areas for viewers to share their ideas, their diachronic interaction and sharing may not satisfy the social needs of all audiences. Bullet curtain websites enable Chinese audiences to respond directly to what happens in the video and synchronize with other viewers, creating a sense of a shared watching experience and belonging. The American life, culture and humour could generate thousands of interesting comments on screen, which the viewers could read while they watched the American TV series. In this way, bullet curtain websites gather large numbers of loyal audiences for American TV shows. On Chinese bullet curtain sites, American TV series outnumber Chinese TV series. One of the popular Chinese bullet curtains websites, Bilibili (see Figure 2.8), has 3,490 episodes of American TV series compared with 1,768 episodes of Chinese TV series (Bilibili, 2015). Bullet curtain websites have become an alternative source for viewing American TV series. However, this situation was reversed after Chinese government strengthened its censorship of online content in 2017. As ordered by the Chinese government, two major bullet curtain websites, Bilibili, which had a permit for publishing audio-visual programs, removed all the overseas TV series and began to require real-name authentication before uploading videos in July, 2017; and AcFun, lacking a permit, had to shut down their film and TV streaming service and forbid their users to upload Western movies and TV series (Lin, 2017; Tencent News, 2017). This regulation did not impact the streaming service of Chinese TV series (Han, 2017). As a result, most Chinese audiences are now using more hidden platforms such as cloud storage websites to stream or download American TV series.

The popularity of American TV series also boosts the interaction between Chinese audiences and the American television industry. It was rare to see American TV stars come to China before 2008, but now they frequently participate in activities in China (Mtime, 2013). For instance, Chinese video websites invited popular American TV stars to China to meet their fans, such as Nina Dobrev (see Figure 2.7), Paul Wesley and Ian Somerhalder (*Vampire Diaries*), Kat Dennings and Beth Behrs (*2 Broke girls*), Stephen Amell (*Arrow*), Johnny Galecki (*The Big Bang Theory*), Chace Crawford (*Gossip Girl*), and Maggie Q (*Nikita*) (Mtime, 2013). In addition, American television series are considered as a positive popular culture among Chinese audiences. According to YDY, a subtitle group's survey of American TV series, most Chinese participants use positive words to describe changes to themselves after watching American TV series, such as becoming 'confident', 'optimistic', or 'humorous'. (Wen, 2008)

Even with government restrictions, Chinese audiences still have more diversified sources to access American TV series compared to the television-dominant period and the transition period. The availability of viewing US television programs through both official and unofficial platforms is higher than during previous periods, and the active viewing style has attracted more Chinese viewers to stream American TV series online. In the future, more web-based US television programs would come to China and compete with local TV (Zhou, 2014d).

### **2.2.2 Audience perspective: young, high-income, and educated people**

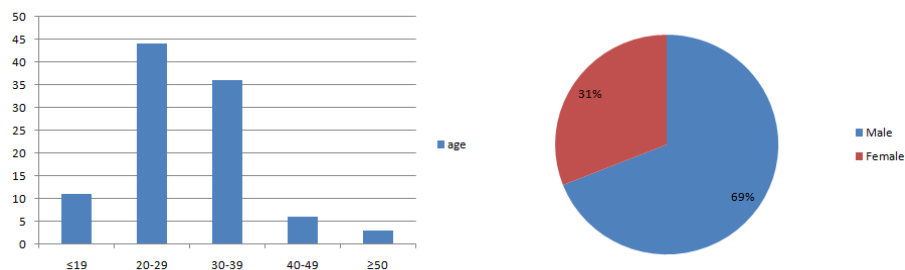
The structure of Chinese audiences, which may be shaped by societal and individual firewalls, should be considered in the study. EntGroup, a Chinese media research group, in a report about social media users (Mtime, Douban, Baidu Post bar, Weibo) and overseas TV series (Yi, 2013) found that American TV series have more followers (62.6%) than South Korean TV series (28.29%) and British TV series (9.11%). Among Mtime and Douban users, mainly college students and white-collar workers, this figure is even higher (86.04%). The report argues that audiences of American TV shows are people who are familiar with American culture, and have relatively higher education and higher incomes compared with audiences of other overseas TV series (Yi, 2013).

**Figure 2.5 Oversea TV series and social network users (June, 2013)**



Figure 2.6 shows the age and gender information concerning the Chinese audiences of American TV series. The statistics were acquired from China's largest search engine, Baidu (Baidu Index, 2014). The main audience group who use Baidu to search American series is aged 20-39 (80%) and male viewers (69%) are dominant. The statistics also show that the audiences of American TV shows are also interested in videos, sports, entertainment, and animations. Regarding the geographic information of audiences, the statistics shows that the developed provinces have the largest American TV series audience group. The six largest audience groups are in Beijing, Zhejiang, Shanghai, Guangdong, Jiangsu, and Shandong. All of these provinces or cities were at the top of the 2013 list of Chinese provincial GDP rankings (Value Line, 2014).

**Figure 2.6 'American TV series' search users (1 Sep. 2013 to 2 Jan. 2015)**



Surveys conducted by subtitle groups show similar results. Yi Dian Yuan surveyed 999 users and the result shows that 58.9 percent of the participants are aged 19-25, and 35.2 percent of the participants are aged 26-40. Feng Ruan and Yi Dian Yuan have conducted surveys about the education level of their users with 308 and 1,024 participants respectively, and the results show that the education level of most of their participants is junior college and above (Luo, 2006). Therefore, Sun (2014a) points out that American TV series influence young people and audiences with purchasing power, and suggested that their tastes represent the future of entertainment in China.

It is important to note that Chinese audiences of American TV shows are between 19 and 40 years old (born after 1978 and before 1999). They are the ‘younger generation’, which includes both students and workers who have a higher social position in China. Most of them are educated with competencies in the English language, use the Internet frequently, are eager to accept new things, and have open minds in the process of cross-culture communication (Wen, 2008).

### **2.3 The global distribution of American television: China and beyond**

The American television industry has created numerous popular TV shows that have helped it to build a global brand (Horan, 2007). American scholars have proposed three golden ages of American TV based on the proliferation of original and classic dramas (Lule, 2012). The first golden age of American television was the period from the late 1950s to the early 1960s (Kellison et al., 2013; Stephens, 2000). This age featured innovative live TV plays such as *Patterns*, scripted by Rod Serling, and *Marty*, scripted by Paddy Chayefsky (Palmer, 2010), and major genres of television programs such as soap operas, medical shows and game shows were developed in this period. Representative shows of this time include *The Twilight Zone* and *I Love Lucy* (Palmer, 2010). The second golden age of American television was in the late 1960s and the 1970s (Miller, 2014; Thompson, 1996). It was marked by stories in long form with more complex structure (Miller, 2014). Some of the notable shows of this period include *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *The Mike Douglas Show* and *All in the Family*. In the 1970s, American TV series filled television schedules across the world (Horan, 2007). The third golden age of American television took place from the 1990s until now, and have revolutionized ‘how and what America watched’ (Thomas, 2013). For the first time, Americans could watch television programs on their own schedules and could binge watch entire seasons (Marcus, 2013; Plunkett & Deans, 2013; Thomas, 2013). The third golden age of American TV was built on a new funding model, led by HBO and taken up by AMC and Showtime (Martin, 2013). These subscription channels are more like independent cinemas that are creative but with a more fixed supply of funding and audiences (Lawson, 2013). In recent years, American online TV distributors have also gone into production with leading groups such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon also producing original TV series and films.

The dominance of American TV series in the global market largely depends on their advanced international distribution networks. Worldwide distributors allow American TV series to reach many overseas audiences, even in remote areas. For instance, HBO and Cinemax are currently available in over 70 countries, and HBO programming is licensed to other television networks in over 150 countries (HBO official website, 2017). These media networks distribute American TV series to

different part of the world, and indirectly win hearts and minds in many countries. *Desperate Housewives* won its time slot in Germany, England, Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands; *Lost* won its time slot in Russia (Bielby & Harrington, 2008). The soap opera *The Bold and the Beautiful* is airing in more than 100 countries, and *Dallas* was a widespread hit throughout Europe and parts of the Middle East (Bielby & Harrington, 2008). Even in such remote parts of the world as Papua New Guinea, both local television channels and Direct TV channels air the latest episodes of American TV series. According to the online program schedule of EMTV, a national television station in Papua New Guinea, American TV series such as *Glee*, *Homeland*, *Dallas*, and *Hostages* have been on the air for quite some time (EMTV, 2012). Satellite and cable TV can also be seen in cities like Port Moresby, and most of these are American channels, such as HBO, Cinemax, Fox, and SyFy Universal (HiTron, 2012). This is not surprising, because the US is the biggest exporter of television programs and movies in the world, controlling over 70 percent of the market (Horan, 2007).

In other ways, innovations in the television industry have enabled American TV series to compete with local television shows in other countries. American TV series now produce visual effects that were hitherto exclusive features of Hollywood movies. In addition, as more homes started to acquire widescreen and high-definition television with excellent sound systems, the demands of television consumption followed these hardware updates. Innovations in the television industry also contributed to increasing competitiveness with movies for entertainment (McCabe & Akass, 2007). This brought more opportunities in the global market for high quality American TV series, which emphasize visual effects. Horan (2007) states that as long as there are networks and cable stations, innovative and groundbreaking American TV series will continue to dominate the global market.

The popularity of American TV series in China is a typical case of the global distribution of American television content. It is a representative case for studying the impact of American television in global audiences within the online media landscape. Before the first American series came to China in 1980, Chinese television audiences rarely knew what American lives were like. Even though American television series encountered fierce censorship and restrictions on broadcasting, they managed to gain popularity on the Chinese Internet. American TV series started to show Chinese audiences American lifestyles and culture in stark contrast to what Chinese television portrayed (Fish, 2017). However, the distribution of American TV series in China also differs from other countries because of China's unique media landscape. In countries with loose media censorship, the American series are broadcast both on television and online. However, in

countries with strict media control, such as Cuba, offline distribution networks are built to deliver American TV series (Harris, 2015a,b). But in the Chinese case, the strong censorship of television and relatively weaker restrictions online push the distribution of American TV series to an online environment. This provides researchers with an ideal opportunity to study the impact of American television series on Chinese audiences within the online environment and retest media effect theories in the Chinese context.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

This chapter emphasized the changing landscape of American TV series in China by clarifying the distribution models in China in different time periods. It is worth noticing that American TV series were brought to China as a result of China implementing Open Door policy in the late 1970s. But it is the changing media landscape, specifically moving from traditional television to the online environment, which contributes to the unprecedented popularity of American TV series.

This chapter also highlighted the similarities and differences in distributions of American TV series in China and other countries, and showed that China belongs in the category of countries that watch American TV series largely online.



Figures in Chapter 2

**Figure 2.7 Vote for a new American TV series (Sohu, 2014c)**



This is a webpage where audiences can vote for new shows after viewing a trailer released after a screening meeting in Los Angeles. The video websites used to purchase the shows according to the number of votes received. Figure 2.7 shows a webpage displaying the vote for purchasing new seasons of American TV series for 2013-2014.

**Figure 2.8 Meet Nina Dobrev at the Sohu news conference (Sohu, 2014a)**



The popular American TV star Nina Dobrev came to China. Figure 2.8 shows her visit to China was organized by video website Sohu.com and sponsored by LUX.

**Figure 2.9 American TV series on Chinese bullet curtain website Bilibili**



Thousands of episodes of American TV series used to be available on bullet curtain websites. Figure 2.9 shows some of the American TV series such as *Mom*, *Hot in Cleveland*, *Elementary*, *Chicago PD*, *The Mentalist*, and *Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce*, which have been uploaded by users on the bullet curtain website Bilibili.

## Chapter 3 Literature review and definitions

“The ubiquitous American culture and values in American TV series make it the best ‘product placement’ for the US. American TV series show every aspect of American life and construct a dazzling exotic world as the ‘American illusion’. This ‘look pretty’ world is actually distant from the real America. However, American culture and values permeate into developing counties in this way. The Chinese young generation even do not notice that their values are influenced by American culture (Li, 2013).”

-- Li Xingxuan, a lecturer in The Fourth Military Medical University based in Xi'an, China

### 3.1 Introduction

The Chinese government is concerned that American television could endanger the Chinese national broadcaster, which it sees as a tool to mold public opinion (The Associated Press, 2014). Some scholars agree that mass media are strongly influential in reflecting the value and belief systems of a society, and the mass audience accepts the information broadcast by the mainstream media (Gerbner, 1983; Kellner, 1995; Lewis, 2002; Morgan, 2002; Shanahan & Morgan, 1999a; Signorielli & Morgan, 1990).

Moreover, the Internet changes the way that Chinese audiences view American TV shows. The Internet blurs the boundaries of time and space and constructs a global cyberspace in which a new cultural identity is forming in different virtual communities (Chen, 2012). These online connections could impact both native and global culture, as people tend to interact online rather than in person (Sandra, 2013). The Internet might not only assist in the spreading of new values, knowledge, and the lifestyles in other countries (Katz & Liebes, 1990), but may also induce the natives to compare whatever they have viewed with whatever they have (Malhotra & Crabtree, 2000). In this sense, the Chinese government realizes that American television may undermine traditional Chinese values and endanger Chinese cultural identities.

The evidence of whether viewing American television could affect their audiences' cultural identity and values is disputed in the media effects literature. Some scholars find viewing American television could erode their audiences' cultural identity and values. Barnett and McPhail (1980)

argue that US television influenced Canadian audiences' perception of themselves as Canadians. Phekoo et al. (1996) found that viewing American television was connected with the audiences' liberal social values concerning relationships, family, and authority in Trinidad. Abdulrahim et al. (2009) found that heavy consumption of American television content has led to being in favor of equal gender roles and liberal values in Kuwait. However, other researchers offer evidence that shows no media effects. Ugochukwu (2008)'s experiment on Nigerian students found that viewing American television programs did not have any significant impact on their values. He suggests that it would take a long time to undo the effects of years of an individual's socialization on their local cultural values (Ugochukwu, 2008).

Another approach regarding the impact of American TV series on the audiences' cultural identity and values is the uses and gratifications (U&G) approach. Many scholars have studied audiences' motivations for viewing American TV. In general, Rubin (1983b) summarizes television users into two types: those who viewed to pass the time and for entertainment, and those who view to seek information. Abdulrahim et al. (2009) suggest four reasons why Kuwait university students view American television programs. They are: high quality programs, useful information, to have a vicarious trans-cultural experience, and seek information about American popular culture. Zohoori (1988) compares the motivations for watching American television between foreign children living in the US and their American counterparts. The result suggests that foreign children watch television more for learning purposes, tended to identify more frequently with television characters, and showed stronger beliefs in the social reality they saw on television (Zohoori, 1988).

This study considers cultivation effect, societal and individual firewalls, and U&G, which may expand the understanding of the media effects in the context of online television. Television broadcasting technology experienced a tremendous change in the last decade, enabling audiences to watch programs on various online devices. The online subscription television has radically changed the viewing experience. Scholars argue that the effect of online media could be either stronger compared with the television era, as audiences may spend more time on viewing online videos, or weaker, as they may only choose the television programs based on their own preferences (Lee et al., 2016). Within this framework, this thesis aims to explore the impact of online television programs on their audiences' cultural identity and values.

This chapter starts with two controversial ideas proposed by the Chinese government: the popularity of American television series is either a form of cultural imperialism or soft power. The cultural

imperialism supporters claim that there is a cultural domination by developed countries like the US on weaker countries by facilitating the ability of audiences in weaker countries to absorb and collaborate with the values and structures of developed countries (Schiller, 1970,1976). This suggests that the audience in the dominated states absorbs American values through watching American TV content, supporting the cultivation approach. However, some scholars take the standpoint of active audiences and suggest that audiences may comprehend the same text in a totally different way (Ang, 1985; Liebes & Katz, 1993). Soft power highlights the capacity to gain the preferences of overseas audiences by promoting cultural attractiveness (Iwabuchi, 2015; Watanabe & McConnell, 2008). Cultural attractiveness is built on the fulfillment of an audience's needs (Calvert et al., 2007; Chen et al., 2017). Among the result of media effects research on television, cultivation theory supports the idea that Chinese audiences could internalize an American mindset and erode Chinese traditions by viewing American TV series.

This chapter also defines the key definitions used in this study and states the dynamics among media, cultural identity, and values. When referring to the impact of American TV series on cultural values, this chapter highlights and adopts polar values between Chinese and American culture as value indicators. Polar values refers to values with opposite or conflicting orientation. The value conflict presented in media content could provoke value clarification, and cause adjustment in audiences' value system (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976)

### **3.2 Two perspectives regarding American TV in China: cultural imperialism and soft power**

Concerns regarding the influence of American TV series on Chinese audiences fit within a larger debate regarding cultural imperialism. Tomlinson (1991) defines cultural imperialism as the practice of politically powerful nations promoting their cultures, including their cultural values, to other less powerful countries. Schiller (1975b) presents the argument that cultural imperialism happens when a culture or society is taken into the modern world system and its mainstream social power is compelled, enforced and occasionally attracted to shape its values and structures to fit in the modern world system. In this modern world system, Western culture, and especially American culture, dominates the cultural interaction and sets standards for other developing societies during their modernization process. The popularity of American TV series in China, from this perspective, could represent a new type of cultural imperialism in the online media era. The distribution of American culture through online TV bypasses the limitations of traditional TV broadcasts, such as the need for a fixed air time and schedule. Besides, American TV series are showing all aspects of American

culture and values to Chinese audiences (Lule, 2012).

Some positivist researchers have tried to test the cultural imperialism hypotheses by examining the erosion of cultural values in the Third World, and other researchers have approached the question within the framework of cross-cultural studies. Cross-cultural settings are used to test media effects on cultural values. The difference in cultural experiences could be important for understanding television's impact on social perceptions (Tamborini & Choi, 1990). Tsai (1970) refers Taiwanese children viewing American program in Taiwan having a more favourable attitude toward certain aspects of the US culture than their non-viewing counterparts. Weimann (1984) found that the same thing has happened to the students in an Israeli high school and a college; heavy viewing was strongly associated with an idealized perception of American life. Beltran (1978) shares the opinion that television could be an instrument for the dissemination of ideology. Ideology here means 'the set of knowledge, values, and patterns of behavior and social relations' (Beltran, 1978 p. 61). Regarding the impact of American television on Korean college students, Kang and Morgan (1986) concluded that the impact of American media messages abroad is not uniform across the population:

(...) our findings do suggest that American programs may indeed be contributing to the Westernization of traditional cultures, but not always in the manner 'intended'. (...). The point is that the impacts of American programs abroad may be more diverse than we have so far acknowledged. As American television continues to 'tighten its grip on the world', it may unwittingly be contributing to conflicts between those who wish to retain and those who wish to reject diverse cultural traditions and values (Kang & Morgan, 1986 p.16).

However, cultural imperialism over-emphasizes the external force of culture. The popularity of American TV in China was not triggered by the promotion of American culture. Chinese audiences are attracted to American TV series and seek to watch them online. This phenomenon is perhaps explained more accurately by soft power. Nye (2008) points out that soft power is a kind of influence that is conducted by the power of attraction more than persuasion. Soft power is a political instrument used by governments to approach and attract people in other countries. What is more, it extends beyond the government's action, to the activities of the private sector, society and culture in general (Waller, 2009). This is different from traditional foreign policy, which aims to affect the leadership of foreign governments. The main methods to achieve soft power include international broadcasting and the export of cultural products (Flew, 2016). The core of its influence is attraction,

and soft power cannot be achieved without it. Arquilla and Ronfeldt (1999) state that politics may be less about winning a war and may ultimately be about whose story wins in the information age. Visual products such as television and film are power tools in this story-telling competition. The trend towards watching American TV series, of course, is neither pushed by the American government in the distribution process, nor influenced by governments in other nations. The audiences from other countries are attracted by American television itself, which is the root cause for the popularity of American television around the world. It reflects the attractiveness of American culture, as manifested through TV shows.

Although cultural imperialism and soft power have different approaches, both of them suggest that Chinese culture is under the influence of American culture. The Chinese government is compelled to reverse this trend due to concerns over China being subjected to manipulation by culturally powerful countries.

Soft power, of course, is not only practiced by powerful Western countries, as the practice could be seen from policies of governments such as Japan and South Korea (Fujita, 2013; Kim & Ni, 2011; The Korean Wave, 2011; Yu, 2013). The Chinese government noticed that Japan and South Korea raised the promotion of their cultural products overseas to a position of national strategy (Lee, 2010). With the increasing influence of Japanese animation and electronic games in the world, the Japanese government packed its content (anime and comics, movies and TV programs, toys and games, music and entertainment) with other industries such as fashion, services, and products together under a 'Cool Japan' promotion strategy (Ministry of Economy, 2013). 'Cool Japan' aims to provide support to the overseas expansion of Japanese content (Ministry of Economy, 2013). The Cool Japan Fund started with 371 million US dollars, most of it provided by the Japanese government (Fujita, 2013). The government's promotion of Japanese content products also boosted the learning of Japanese language around the world. According to the findings of the Japan Foundation's survey in 2012, 54 percent of participants' reasons for learning Japanese is an interest in manga, anime, and Japanese pop music (Japan Foundation, 2012). China has the largest group of Japanese learners outside Japan in spite of the history of rivalry between the two countries (Japan Foundation, 2012).

With the global success of Korean pop music and television dramas, the Korean government has also tried to boost its soft power through the Korean Wave (Kim & Ni, 2011). Korean Wave was started by the popularity of Korean dramas in Asia and expanded to enchant audience in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (Kim & Ni, 2011). It also has loyal fans in Western Europe and

North America (Kim & Ni, 2011). For example, the Korean historical drama *Dae Jang Geum* first aired in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Mainland China with high ratings and aroused a viewing mania in the Chinese-speaking world (Kim & Ni, 2011). In addition, the large number of viewers in China also increased the consumption of Korean products. According to *The Hollywood Reporter*, the huge popularity of *My Love from the Star*, which features a female character who is crazy about fried chicken and beer, led to a 200 percent increase in Korean beer exports (Brzeski, 2014b). Korean soap operas also boost overseas tourism to Seoul (Hohnholz, 2009). The South Korean government realizes the importance of soft power to their culture and economy sections, and have assigned Korea's favourite soap opera star, Ryu Si Won, to be the promotional ambassador for Korean tourism and culture since 2006 (Hohnholz, 2009).

Above all, cultural products such as television series seem to have a strong influence on their audiences. Although television series from South Korea and Japan are also popular in China, many scholars agree that their popularity has come from the common Confucian cultural values and origin that resonate with Chinese audiences (Kirsch & Gössmann, 2014; Lee, 2011; Minter, 2016; Ryoo, 2009). Therefore, American series' popularity and its exposition of Western culture in China made it a perfect alternative to study the effect of soft power.

### **3.3 Theoretical frameworks: media effects theories**

Media effects theories refers to the theories about the ways in which mass media affect their audiences' thinking and behaviour. These media effects theories could help to explain how American TV series affect Chinese audiences' cultural identity and values. After reviewing the development of media effects theories, cultivation theory, the firewall model, and the uses and gratifications (U&G) theory, have been selected to build the theoretical framework for this study, in order to explore the cultural consequences of Chinese audiences viewing American TV series in China.

Cultivation theory emphasizes the impact of the media content on its audiences, which could guide this study to find the relationship between viewership and viewers' perceptions of cultural identity and values. The firewall model explains the firewalls that limit the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences with certain characteristics. Meanwhile, U&G theory highlights the active role that audiences play in media consumption, which could guide this study to explore the influence of gratification on the media effect.

Since the study of mass media effects began in the 1920s (Lowery & De Fleur, 1988), researchers have generated a very large body of literature. The history of media effects theories over the past ninety years alternates between powerful effects and minimal and even no effects. Generally, there are three models of media effects.

#### 1) *Direct media effects*

Direct media effects model believes that mass-communicated messages immediately infect the recipients' mind (Baran & Davis, 2015). One of the most famous theories of this model is hypodermic needle theory, which suggests that the media message is directly injected into the minds of audiences, who then have the same responses to the same message, due to the belief that propaganda played an important role during World War I (Ruddock, 2001). This view emerged during the 1920s and 1930s, reflecting the powerful propaganda machine that influenced many people and persuaded them to join the army. The hypodermic needle theory was first mentioned in the 1927 book *Propaganda Technique of the World War* by Harold Lasswell (Lasswell, 1927). During World War II, the Western allies, the US and the UK also established propaganda campaigns to prevent their citizens from being brainwashed by totalitarian countries. These democratic societies had to adopt a similar way to conduct their propaganda campaigns and they viewed their citizens as vulnerable and defenceless to receiving enemy propaganda, like needles injected into their mind. However, this model lost its influence because it over-emphasized the influence of the media and ignored the free will of audiences.

#### 2) *Limited media effects*

The limited media effects model suggests that the audience interprets, negotiates and discusses media messages, rather than experiencing a direct media influence (Baran et al., 2014). As a result of a greater understanding of the role of audiences in the effects process, the limited media effects model was extended from 1940s to late 1960s. These theories also stress that the media could reinforce the audience's existing views. The classic versions of this theory are two-step flow theory and the uses and gratifications theory (Ruddock, 2000). Two-step flow theory refers to a media message is that interpreted by opinion leaders or influential people first and then the message flows to the mass audiences (Lazarsfeld et al., 1968). The uses and gratifications theory proposes that audiences use media to satisfy their individual and group needs (Blumler & Katz, 1974b). Thus, rather than focus on what media can do to audiences, use and gratifications theory looks at how audiences use media to fulfill their own needs in different situations (Fortner & Fackler, 2014).



### 3) *Strong media effects*

The strong media effects theories are a middle ground between the direct media effects theories and limited media effects theories. Strong media effects theories suggest that the media plays a role as a socializing agency, advising and guiding audiences to practice social control. Researchers noted the political, social and cultural changes in the 1970s led them to identify strong media effects with respect to audiences (Scheufele, 1999). These ideas could be seen from cultivation theory, in which television cultivates the views of audiences, rather than directly persuading them to change their mind (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999a).

As American media dominates the information flow in the world, scholars in other countries have constantly focused on the effect of American media, and especially television, on local audiences. There are numerous studies about American TV's impact on its overseas audiences, but the results differ. Sparkes (1977) conducted a survey of American and Canadian residents to determine if cross-border TV had an effect on their attitudes toward each other. She found very little effect on attitudes related to viewing foreign television, which she explained as the minimal difference between Canadian and American television. Ugochukwu (2008) refers to exposure to American TV programs affecting audiences' knowledge of the US, but not their behaviours, beliefs, values, and attitudes. She mentions that socialization and its power to maintain cultural resistance cannot be underestimated when talking about the effect of American TV programs.

Scholars agree that exposure to American TV could affect audiences' perceptions of the US and generate stereotypes. Weimann (1984) found a positive correlation between the audiences' beliefs and viewing American television among Israeli students. He found that heavy viewers of American television tended to overestimate Americans' wealth compared to light television viewers (Weimann, 1984). Santoro suggests that negative stereotypes and attitudes are linked to heavy viewing of American television programs among Venezuelan children (cited in Beltran & de Cardona, 1979). The 'good guys' in any story are white, single and rich Americans; the 'bad guys' are usually black and poor; and the school children prefer the American lifestyle and think that money is the most important thing (Beltran & de Cardona, 1979).

Furthermore, scholars argue that viewing American television could affect viewers' national identity in developing countries. Most of these studies have been conducted in countries neighboring the US, based on the geographical advantages of American cultural distribution. According to Skinner and Houang (1987), Caribbean people enjoy American television and characters more than local ones,

even without an obsession of US television. Skinner and Houang (1987) referred to this as findings that support that cultural imperialism achieved through media is warranted. Teelucksingh (2005) noted that the acculturation process brought by the American media was a major factor in Caribbean men losing their cultural identity.

The media studies on the effect of American television in China are focused on socialization effects. Socialization is a multidimensional process involving the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, and values (Norris & Inglehart, 2012). Dong et al. (1998) conducted a survey on the socialization effects of American television and films in China. They point out that theme recognition and functionality evaluations predicted the acceptance of American values, rather than viewing behaviour. Yao (2012) found that American TV shows made up for the defects of local culture products in Chinese value system construction, as Chinese television could only reflect the values approved by the Chinese government (Yao, 2012). Thus, the following three theories are the basis of the theoretical framework of this study.

### **3.3.1 Theory that claims strong media effects: the cultivation theory**

Cultivation theory, developed by Gerbner and his colleagues, treats the mass media as an agent of socialization operating within the local community and national culture (Gerbner et al., 2002a). In particular, cultivation theory suggests that frequent exposure to the mass media, especially television, leads to the internalization of its messages (Norris & Inglehart, 2009). Television viewing links individuals to a larger synthetic world, a world created by television. Most audiences with certain social and psychological characteristics, dispositions, and worldviews use television as their major vehicle of cultural participation. In this manner, television dominates its audiences' sources of information, and continued exposure to televisual messages is likely to reiterate, confirm, and cultivate that audiences' values and perspectives (Gerbner et al., 1986).

The cultivation effect has been further sorted into first order and second order effects. First order effects refers to the perception of reality, while second order effects involves judgement, such as the audiences' attitudes and values towards their environment or society (Gerbner et al., 1986). Potter (1991) finds that the first order and second order effects are related to each other. Other scholars define the relationship such that the memory based first order cultivation could later be used to form second order cultivation, such as judgements (Shrum et al., 2004; Shrum et al., 2011).

The cultivation effect of television refers to the notion that television viewing could influence the audience's perception of social reality independently. Those viewers who spend more time watching television are more likely to accept the images, values, and ideologies that they have seen on television. As Cohen and Weimann (2000) argue, the essential idea of cultivation theory is that the more time people spend consuming television content, the more likely they will be convinced by what they have seen on television (Cohen & Weimann, 2000). In this case, there is a cultivation differential between television audiences. Cultivation differential is the margin of difference in the perception of reality between viewers who belong to the same demographic groups (Gerbner et al., 2002a).

Although the origin of cultivation theory was to study the impact of violent television programs on their audience (George et al., 1978; Gerbner, 1969; Gerbner & Gross, 1976), it has been further developed to study the influence of ideological issues such as beliefs and values (Gerbner et al., 1980b; Pfau et al., 1995; Slater, 1982). Potter (1990) finds that some values commonly expressed in television shows are more strongly favoured by heavy viewers as compared to light viewers among high school students in the US. Reimer and Rosengren (1990) also found a small but persistent relationship between television consumption and perception of values in a Swedish sample.

There are a number of studies within the cultivation theory literature that have focused on the relationship between the media and cultural values. In one studies, the aim was to explain the methods that particular media messages have on reinforcing existing cultural values (Carbaugh, 1988). In another, the goal was to explore in what way the media operates as a threat to existing cultural values. Their major claim was that global media play an important role in altering native value systems and cultures. It has been noted that economic values have been altered by the Western media by promoting a craving for goods and services from Western countries. For instance, Dorfman and Mattelart (1975) argued that watching cartoons like *Donald Duck* might cause children in Latin American countries to be more individualistic, competitive, and materialistic. Such impacts have also been found in political values (e.g. Masmoudi, 1979) and aesthetic values (e.g. Dissanayake, 1985; Virulrak, 1983).

The number of studies on the impact of media consumption on values outside of Western cultures are relatively small, despite Tan (1987) arguing that such studies are essential as an increasing number of Western television programs penetrate developing countries. Tsai (1970) found that heavy viewers of American programs were more likely to favour American values (e.g., pleasure)

and less likely to hold traditional values (e.g., forgiveness) than light viewers in the Philippine samples (see also Kang & Morgan, 1986; Morgan, 1990). In contrast, Elasmr and Hunter (1997) point out that the effects of global media tend to be small, and some effects may be caused by the value-based selective viewing rather than media effects.

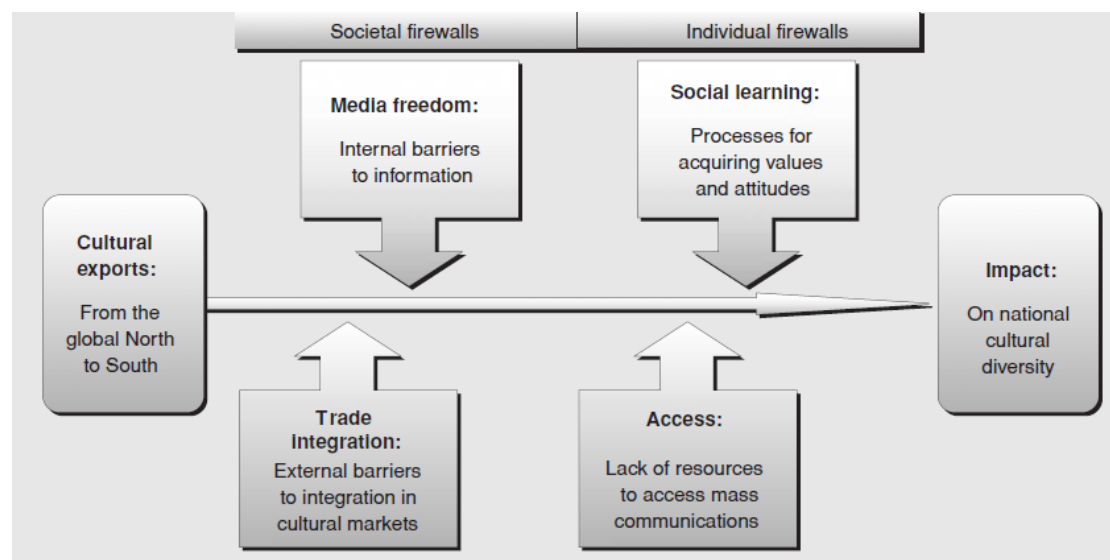
Only a few research studies examine the impact of American television on Chinese audiences using the cultivation approach because US television was banned in China until 1980. Even after China normalized its diplomatic relations with the US, American media penetration was minimal and the imported content was limited to that from some socialist countries (Wang & Chang, 1996). With the introduction of China's Open Door policy, the quantity of imported television content has increased, as well as the diversity of categories and nations supplying the content. Against this background, Chinese scholars started to study the impact of American television on Chinese audiences, although only a small number of the US television programs could broadcast in China. For instance, Pan (1997) examined the relationship between value changes and media exposure in China, and found that exposure to imported films and television programs was related to 'reduced concern for fulfilling one's family responsibilities, a greater desire for free choice in mate selection, and higher degree of hedonism' (Pan, 1997). Pan (1997) concluded that exposure to Western entertainment media caused an erosion of Chinese traditional Confucian values and increased the salience of individualistic values (Pan, 1997). Even after American TV series gained unprecedented popularity among Chinese Internet TV viewers, the literature has not offered enough evidence to show the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural values and identity.

This study employs the cultivation approach by examining the relationship between viewership and two category of cultivation variables—audiences' perceptions of realities, which belongs to the first order effects, and audiences' perceptions of cultural values, which belongs to the second order effects. The first order effects indicate the impacts on the audience's perceptions of reality, while the second order effects indicate the impact on people's beliefs, attitudes, and values (Shrum et al., 2011; Chong et al., 2012). This study compares the differences in perceptions of cultural values between American TV series viewers and non-viewers. For American TV series viewers, this study explores the differentials in perception of realities and cultural values between heavy viewers (who watch a lot of American TV series) and light viewers, and long-term viewers and short-term viewers.

### 3.3.2 Theory that claims limited media effects: the firewall model of cosmopolitan communications

Cosmopolitan communications refer to the way that people learn about and interact with people and places beyond cultural borders. The structural, technological, and economic changes in mass communication promote cosmopolitan communication. The growth of cosmopolitan communications helps established the predominance of Western, especially American, cultural trade in the world. The cultural trade mainly flows from the Western postindustrial nations in the global North to the countries in the global South. Norris & Inglehart (2009) proposed the firewall model of cosmopolitan communications, stating that the consequences of cultural exports on national cultural diversity are moderated by societal and individual firewalls (see Figure 3.1). In this model, they claim that indigenous values are more impervious to the influence of cosmopolitan communication than is generally believed because of “firewalls”, which are a series of intervening conditions that moderate the impact of cosmopolitan communication in national cultures (Norris & Inglehart, 2009). The firewall model, on the other hand, offers an alternative way to study the long-term effects of cosmopolitan communications. This study selected the firewall model as part of a theoretical framework explaining the reasons why the Chinese audiences of American TV series are limited to a specific group of audience group rather than general mass audiences.

**Figure 3.1 The firewall model of cosmopolitan communications**



The societal firewalls include media freedom and trade integration. Trade integration refers to barriers to integration in cultural markets. Media freedom refers to internal barriers to information. In the Chinese case, these two societal firewalls work together due to the Chinese media, especially

television media, belonging to the state. The Chinese government imposed restrictions on overseas television programs. According to Chinese broadcasting policies, foreign TV series were only allowed to comprise 25 percent of the TV series' airtime and could only be aired after 22:00 (Wen, 2009). These broadcasting restrictions aim to protect the local cultural industry; however, they have a notable influence on the cultural exports. Moreover, the strict censorship of television content has caused obstacles to the distribution of overseas television programs in China. Even in the relatively free online environment, the Chinese government requires overseas television content to pass its censorship before streaming on Chinese video websites. These media regulations not only restricted the trade of overseas television content, but limit the Chinese viewers' access to foreign television programs. Meanwhile, these media regulations also limit the effects of foreign television programs in China.

The individual firewalls include social learning and access. Social learning refers to individual social psychological barriers to learning. Social learning firewalls are the limits of transferring knowledge across cultures due to incongruences in understanding. In the Chinese case, language and cultural barriers have decreased Chinese audiences' abilities to absorbing the information conveyed by American TV series. Access refers to access to mass communication. The restriction on Internet access caused by lack of resources could be another individual firewall for Chinese audiences. Although Chinese Internet penetration has grown rapidly during the last decade, there is still a lack access to the Internet. According to CNNIC, the number of Chinese Internet users reached 710 million in 2016, which is only 51.7 percent of the total population (CNNIC, 2017). The lack of Internet literacy and inability to afford Internet access are among the individual firewalls that have restricted Chinese audiences from watching American TV series (CNNIC, 2017).

### **3.3.3 Theory that claims no media effect: the uses and gratifications approach**

Uses and gratifications is an approach to understanding the motives of audiences who actively use media to satisfy their specific needs. It is an approach that concentrates on audiences to understand mass communication (Severin & Tankard, 2010). U&G focuses on 'what do people do with media', which is different from other media effect theories that question 'what does media do to people' (Katz 1959, pp.3). It is largely intended to explore the psychological gratifications that audiences seek from the use of a particular medium (Ko et al., 2005).

The U&G approach examines the motivations for viewing television, typologies of television usage, and the link between television use, and the individual's social condition, attitudes and behaviours.

For instance, McQuail et al. (1972) propose four types of media-audience interactions: diversion, personal relationships, personal identity, and surveillance. Greenberg defines seven motivations for viewing television: habit, relaxation, companionship, passing time, learning, arousal and escape (Greenberg, 1974). Using a similar approach, Rubin determines six type of television viewing motivations: learning, passing time, companionship, escape, arousal and relaxation (Rubin, 1979). Palmgreen and Rayburn have noted seven kind of gratification that the public sought through viewing television: relaxing, learning about things, communication utility, forgetting, passing time, companionship and entertainment (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1979).

Until recently, U&G studies followed the path of explaining the kind of gratifications sought from viewing different television content. Rubin has found that certain types of television programs are related to human needs, including information acquisition, escape, emotional release, companionship, reality exploration and value reinforcement (Rubin, 2002). Variables like entertainment, relaxation, information acquisition, arousal, pastimes, diversion, escape, and sociality were used as references in previous uses and gratifications research (Rubin et al., 2010). There is no single or fixed list of the gratifications obtained from media use, but there are multiple categories and classification systems (Charney, 1996). Greenberg (1974) has created a Viewing Motivation Scale to examine children's television consumption in Britain, while Rubin (1981) adapted it for the US context. Greenberg's scale and Rubin's adaptation are the most widely used means of measuring TV viewing motivation, and they have been used in several studies of television, including music TV (Sun, 1986) and soap operas (Rubin & Perse, 1987) viewed by college students (Bantz, 1982; Finn & Gorr, 1988), adults (Rubin, 1981, 1983a), and elders (Ostman & Jeffers, 1980).

In different cultural contexts and media usage, the motivation for viewing American television could be different. In the Chinese context, for example, Jiang and Leung (2012)'s study investigates the types of gratification sought through viewing American and Korean TV dramas from a sample of 455 Internet users in urban China. Using the Television Viewing Motives Scale (Rubin, 1983a) and conducted a focus group, Jiang and Leung (2012) found four gratifications that Chinese television audiences sought from watching foreign television dramas: entertainment, sociability, learning, and escape. The authors argue that watching foreign TV dramas has become a way for Chinese viewers to enhance their ability to 'modernize' their lifestyles (Jiang & Leung, 2012). Wu (2015) uses the same method and questions to assess the gratifications sought from viewing American TV series and four factors stood out: entertainment, learning, sociability, and escape. Zhou (2011b)'s research evaluated 279 students regarding the kinds of gratification they sought. He found that the main

reasons why college students watch American TV series are relaxation and to learn English. However, experiencing different cultural and language environments were also among the reasons US television series appeal to Chinese college students (Zhou, 2011b).

From the standpoint of an active audience, U&G approach argues that our motives for consuming a particular kind of media products may enhance or dampen any outcomes or effects (Krcmar & Strizhakova, 2009). Rubin and Step (2000) found that those radio listeners with strong motivations of parasocial interaction and information, as well as using it to pass time, feel more positive towards talk radio hosts and were more likely to follow their advice. Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007) found that those with a strongly desire of entertainment and relaxation are more likely to think that what they have seen on reality TV programs are real. Zurbriggen and Morgan (2006) show that the gratification of learning and entertaining mediates the relationship between viewing dating reality shows and attitudes toward sex. U&G supporters claim that gratifications are mediators and moderators of effects (Blumler, 1979; Katz et al., 1973; Krcmar & Strizhakova, 2009; Zurbriggen & Morgan, 2006). This study highlights gratification as the factors that mediate the cultivation effect on Chinese audiences by underlining the U&G approach.

### **3.4 Culture, identity and values**

There are numerous definitions of culture in various disciplines. Edward Burnett Tylor was the anthropologist who first defined culture. In a broad ethnographic sense, he refers to culture as a synthesis combining custom, philosophy, art, science, morals, and any other ability that a person could learn in a society (cited by Kuper, 2009; Tylor, 1871). Tylor's definition of culture is controversial and has been criticized by others as too general (Spencer-Oatey, 2012). Raymond Williams views culture as a 'whole way of life' within a society (Szeman & Kaposy, 2010 p.54; Williams, 2011). To define culture more specifically, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) state that traditional ideas and values compose the core of a culture (cited by Adler & Gundersen, 2007). Under the same view, Hall (1989)'s Cultural Iceberg Model proposes that a large portion of culture, the internal culture consists of beliefs, values and thoughts patterns that is underneath the surface of external culture such as social interactions. Hofstede et al. (2010)'s Cultural Onion Model also confirms that the cultures have values as their core and surround it with practical layers like rituals, heroes and symbols.

Values are intangible beliefs with judgments that are shared and endorsed within a society. Because of its cultural environment, the formation of values have varied throughout history and across



cultures. Values are an indicator that show a belief is right or wrong based on personal or social preference (Rokeach, 1973). Schwartz (1994) refers to values as variable aims that guide people or other social elements to make decisions and conduct plans. Although values are rooted in history and culture, they can be justified by life experiences, cognitive development and moral maturity (Moore & Asay, 2008). In addition, values relate to domains, attitudes, ideologies, and belief systems (Maio et al., 2006; Rohan, 2000). The formation of values is a cognitive process (Rokeach, 1973). Values that externally expressed by taking actions (Joas, 2000) pose significant influence on behaviour within and across situations (Blankenship & Wegener, 2008). In this study, values are a more reliable indicator of cultural changes.

Identity refers to how people define themselves. As discussed by Sedikides and Brewer (2001), identity can refer to self-definitions of both individuals and larger social groups. Furthermore, they suggest that identity includes interactions between people and groups, because recognition by others as part of the identity (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). Based on existing approaches to defining identity, Sedikides and Brewer (2001) summarize three levels: individual, relational, and collective. Classification is based on the content of the identity and the process of forming and maintaining these identities (Vignoles et al., 2011). Individual identity refers to a person's self-definition, which includes life goals, values and beliefs (Waterman, 1999), standards for behaviour and decision-making (Atkins et al., 2005; Hardy & Carlo, 2005), self-esteem and self-evaluation (Kernis et al., 2008; Sedikides & Gregg, 2008), future expectations (Markus & Nurius, 1986), and life experiences (McAdams, 2006). Relational identity refers to what a person's roles are, as defined by others and how they interpret their roles (Vignoles et al., 2011). Collective identity refers to defining a group of people within the social categories they belong to, the meanings that they contribute to these social categories, and the feelings, beliefs, and attitudes that result from identifying with them (Ashmore et al., 2004; De Fina, 2007; van Zomeren et al., 2008). Smolicz (1981) argued that in a collective culture like China, the core values that shared with its members binds individuals to their group and provides them a sense of cultural identity. In general, changes in values could indicate the impact that media has had on audiences' cultural identity.

The formation of identity is a continuous process. Erikson (1968a) argues that identity development is a lifelong process, constructed in dialogue with social expectations. As Hall (1990) suggests, identity is an incomplete 'production' in process, rather than a fixed fact. Haraway (1991) shares the similar ideas that identity is never finished and is constructed progressively. Although identity is constructed by a group of social elements, shared values are at its core (Weeks, 1990).

## **3.5 Media, cultural identity and values**

### **3.5.1 Media and cultural values**

Cultural values are a set of values that are shared by the members of a certain culture. Unlike cultural norms, values set standards and rules for behaviours, identifying what should be judged as good or evil. People often show cultural values in their behavioural patterns, community relationships, rituals, and cultural products, which can be perceived by others. Members within a society learn and internalize these values. Cultural values are also referred to as a type of social cognition (Kahle, 1983), and this definition is shared by many others (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976; Kahle & Timmer, 1983; Rokeach, 2008).

Although a value system is relatively stable, scholars argue that the media could affect cultural values through value clarification. Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976) suggest that the media could clarify values by presenting information that contains a conflict of values. Once values are clarified by the media, audiences may adjust these values in their own value systems (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976). The adjustment of values means that audiences have to choose between two incompatible goals and the ways in which to achieve them. In the process of making decisions in specific situations, the individual's general priority of values may be adjusted.

Convergence theorists assume that the exposure to Western entertainment and Hollywood movies could change the values of audiences in traditional developing societies (Marsh, 2007). Theorists such as Herbert Schiller, Edward Hermann, and Robert McChesney have long argued that the Western media is the missionary that spreads the values of consumer capitalism around the world (Herrmann & McChesney, 2001; Schiller, 1971). Talking about cultural convergence, Norris and Inglehart comment:

The existence of permeable cultural boundaries, integration into cultural trade on world markets, and the expanded volume and pace of news information and audiovisual entertainment exchanged across national borders imply that countries like Britain, the United States, Japan, Germany, and Sweden, which have different historical traditions, social structures, and religious legacies, will gradually come to share increasingly similar values and attitudes. Indeed, this fear is at the root of French concerns about Americanization, which assumes that the combined forces of *CSI*, McDonald's, and Hollywood will undermine the culture of Moliere, Sartre, and

haute cuisine, unless they are offset by new measures to protect European television within the European Union (Norris & Inglehart, 2009 p. 266).

Cultivation theorists share the same view that the media could adjust value systems. As Gerbner (2002) argues, if the dominant media changes the old social images and practices, the new values will take place of the old ones to support the new social order. The dominant media provide the information that shapes the mainstream culture. The values embedded in the media's agenda are used by the public to support their ideas and behaviours. However, when technology, audiences and other elements of the dominant media change, the dominant culture has to adjust their old cultural patterns. Under these circumstances, the new values emerge to support the new social meanings (Gerbner, 2002). Therefore, Gerbner et al. (2002b) suggest that institutional needs influence the creation and distribution of information flow on television, which could create, adjust, sustain and transform the values of the mass audience.

Cultural imperialism supporters also find evidence that television could influence audiences' cultural values. They believe in the cultural hegemony of those industrialized nations who determine the general cultural values and set the standards for worldwide civilizations. Schiller (1975a) describes cultural imperialism as a process that a society brought into the modern world system and its leading social classes are attracted to or forced to corresponding with the values or structures that set up by the centre of the system.

Television series are one of the most popular and influential cultural products in China during the past 30 years (Zhong, 2010a). Cultural products such as television shows could both express values and help to transmit values (Kluver & Fu, 2008). But the transmission of values across cultural boundaries may lead to conflict (Kluver & Fu, 2008). With the growing popularity of American series in China, its impact on Chinese audiences' cultural values has become a concern for the Chinese government (Huang, 2015). Most scholars study the relationship between media usage and the audiences' perception of cultural values by comparing the audiences with different viewership. However, there are only a few studies that have conducted diachronic research focusing on the perception of values as a result of media usage.

### **3.5.2 Media and cultural identity**

The anthropologists Whiting and Child (1953) summarized cultural beliefs and practices as a 'custom complex', made up by the 'customary practice of beliefs, values, sanctions, rules,

motives, and satisfactions associated with it' (cited in Shweder et al., 1998 p. 872). In the process of forming a cultural identity, people adopt the custom complexes from one or more cultural communities (Arnett, 2003). Erikson (1968b) suggests that ideology (beliefs and values), and love (personal relationships) assembles the core of cultural identity.

Cultural identity is not only defined by the shared history and heritage of a culture, but is also defined by how people are going to interpret their own culture in the future. As Hall (1990) proposes in his book, there are two different approaches to understanding 'cultural identity'. The first approach defines cultural identity as a sort of collective 'one true self', which refers to how people share a common history and ancestry. This definition strengthens the shared historical and cultural codes, which compose people's stable identity. The second approach defines the similarity as well as the differences that constitute 'what we really are' and 'what we have become'; therefore, it suggests a cultural identity is the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power, rather than fixed items in the past (Hall, 1990). Cultural identity is a cultural selection regarding how to respond to the external environment, and includes a collection of ideas, beliefs, traditions, languages and behaviours (Babran, 2008). This means that cultural identity is based on cultural experiences in the past, but continues to develop over time.

The convergence of online media and globalization brings challenges to the traditional formation of cultural identity (Chen, 2012). The public acquire identities partly through exposure to the information that flows through the media (Gerbner et al., 2002b). Globalization enables cultures and traditions to flow around the world (Gordon & Meunier, 2001). Information technologies have minimized cultural and economic barriers (Kluver, 2010; Esarey & Kluver, 2015). The use of online media may shake the roots of cultural identity by weakening or strengthening the connection between people and their community (Hampton & Wellman, 1999; Singh, 2010). Time and space have been compressed into a global cyberspace. New cultural identities are formed through interacting with different virtual communities (Chen, 2012). Cultural identity is fostered by online media that breaks historical and geographical boundaries. Therefore, one of the most common arguments is that the flow of cross-border information promoted by the Internet is weakening people's cultural identity and sense of belonging to their local communities (Vertovec, 2001; Wilson & Donnan, 1998).

Television is a powerful tool in changing a cultural context, because it takes aspects of culture from the 'real' world and exaggerates them to constantly attract its audiences' attention (Bohannon, 1995).

This may make the virtual world shown on TV more exciting than the real world, and the temptation to change ‘reality’ may become overwhelming (Bohannon, 1995). With the assistance of the Internet, American TV programs can cross geographic boundaries and may spread American culture to other countries with less resistance than before. For audiences in developing countries who have never been to the US, they may think that American life is more exciting than their own and they may be willing to learn from the new culture. The international media expands people’s knowledge about other cultures and countries, which may encourage understanding and trust between two cultures, and may also shake local identities. The most direct index of cultural identity is people’s perception of reality.

### **3.5.3 The impact of globalization on the formation of cultural identity**

Globalization has significantly influenced the formation of cultural identity and may be particularly influential in adolescence and emerging adulthood. Emerging adulthood is proposed as a human development period from the late teenage years through the twenties, with a focus on ages 18-25 (Arnett, 2000). Emerging adulthood is the period of identity explorations. The main Chinese audiences of American TV series are in this age group. Media such as television, movies, music, and the Internet contribute to the rapid and extensive spread of ideas across cultures, and adolescents and emerging adults tend to have more of an interest in popular and media culture compared to children or adults. One model that can be used to understand how globalization promotes diverse cultural identities in adolescence and emerging adulthood is Jensen et al. (2011)’s reconceptualization of Berry (1997)’s patterns of acculturation by bring in the context of globalization.

1) *Assimilation*. This refers to people who do not want to maintain their original cultural identity. Instead, they reject it and favour their new culture, brought by globalization, as the foundation of an entirely new cultural identity. This happens in places where economies and societies change rapidly, and young people may find that their local culture did not have much to offer to the environment that they are growing up in (Jensen et al., 2011). These people choose to take the global culture rather than local culture as their future identity. Applying this to the Chinese audiences of American TV series, assimilation happens when these audiences attribute the affluent American life they see on TV to American culture and values, where assertiveness, self-confidence, and initiative are rewarded, not the traditional Chinese values of humility, self-sacrifice, and self-denial (Jensen et al., 2011).

2) *Separation*. This refers to people who value their original culture, and avoid interacting with the global culture that they have been exposed through the media. In Berry's model, the separation strengthens loyalty to the local culture and avoids interaction with the global culture. This happens in places where the local culture was being influenced by globalization, but the people there preferred the local culture rather than the global culture and want to isolate themselves from the influence of the global culture (Jensen et al., 2011). This applies to Chinese audiences who think American culture cannot fit into their social reality, and they try to preserve their own cultural identity.

3) *Integration*. This refers to the original cultural identity being blended with elements of the global culture. Besides their local identity, young people develop a global identity that provides them with a sense of belonging to a global culture, which includes interactions with the events, practices, styles, and information from the global culture. Television and the Internet are crucial in forming a global identity, as they provide exposure to people, events, and information from all over the world. Along with their global identity, people continue to develop a local identity as well. The local identity is mainly used in their daily interactions with family, friends, and community members. There is no doubt that globalization has modified local cultures everywhere. These changes greatly alter traditional cultural practices and beliefs. Such changes may lead to a hybrid identity by combining local culture with the global culture (Jensen et al., 2011). This applies to the Chinese audiences of American TV series when they take aspects of American culture that they think would be good for them and combine with their Chinese culture.

Integration pattern could also be referred to as cultural hybridisation. Bhabha (1994) claims that cultural hybridisation opens up a 'third place' within which culture encounter and transform each other. In the post-colonial context, cultural hybridisation could be viewed as a reaction to cultural hegemony (Bhabha, 1994). Cultural hybridisation means 'the ways in which forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices' (Rowe & Shelling, 1991:231). Cultural hybridisation is the creation of a rich hybrid cultural perspective by incorporating multiple cultures (Li, 2016). Globalization make identity patterns more complex as people assert local loyalties but want to share in global values and lifestyles (Booth, 1991; Lipschutz, 1992). Hybridisation is increasingly a universal feature of cultural production and consumption, with both the globalization and localization of the cultural industry (Ryoo, 2008).

4) *Marginalization*. This refers to people who have little interest in keeping their original culture, but also reject or are rejected by the global culture. Marginalization may take place where a local culture is being rapidly altered by globalization. The people may find that they cannot recognize their local culture, so that they do not feel that they are connected to it, and they may feel that there is no place for them in the global culture (Jensen et al., 2011). Marginalization occurs when the cultural gap between local culture and the global culture is vast. Western media may disconnect local young audiences from their culture, leaving them confused and alienated. The ideals of Western life may have raised the audiences' expectations for their own life to unachievable levels, and these ideals and expectations eventually collide with their real lives. As a result, they may feel marginalized and alienated from both the local and the global culture (Jensen et al., 2011). However, this is unlikely the case of China, because the Western media are unable to cut off all the connections between Chinese audiences and their culture due to the Chinese government's management of the media. Chinese audiences who prefer to consume American TV series are more likely to have both a higher education and a higher income; therefore, the gap between their lifestyle and American lifestyle may not be so large that they feel an American lifestyle is unattainable.

### **3.6 The difference between Chinese values and American values**

Each culture has its own distinct value systems and orientations (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). The values of Chinese culture and American culture are no exception, as the Chinese cultural values originate from Confucian ideology (Minkov & Hofstede, 2012) and American cultural values are influenced by both the Christian religion and the concept of liberty (Kohm, 2008).

Pan et al. (1994) summarize six major differences between Chinese and American cultural value systems. First, Chinese culture tends to believe in the passive acceptance of fate and nature, while American culture emphasizes that people should actively master them. Second, Chinese culture emphasizes the inner experience of meaning and emotions, while American culture emphasizes the external experiences of the world. Third, Chinese culture is characterized by a closed worldview, which values stability and harmony; however, American culture is typified by an open worldview, which prizes change and movement. Fourth, Chinese culture is past-oriented, respecting traditions and kinship ties, while American culture is future-oriented, and emphasizes rationalism. Fifth, Chinese culture values the vertical dimensions of social networks, while American culture emphasizes the horizontal dimensions of interpersonal relationships. Sixth, Chinese culture values a person's duties to family, clan and state, while American culture emphasizes individual personality. These six dimensions outline the main differences between the Chinese and American cultural value

systems in general.

Hofstede (2001) dissembled the gigantic value system into separate values in his book *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations*. He uses both long-term orientation and short-term orientation to define the difference between Chinese and American cultural values. Specifically, China belongs to the group of countries with a culture of long-term orientation and the US belongs to group of countries with a culture of short-time orientation (Hofstede, 2001). Long-term orientation values continuity, persistence, thrift, and hierarchical relationships, whereas short-term orientation values instant gratification, leisure time, and less difference in status (Andersen, 2011). In this section, typical cultural values are selected to illustrate the difference between these two cultural value systems.

This study uses a cross-cultural communication approach, whereby the different Chinese and American cultural values adopted as an index to define and indicate the impact of American TV series on Chinese audience's cultural values. Moreover, the media's impact on values was achieved by value clarification, which is presenting information that provokes value conflict within audiences (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976). Therefore, the value indexes were focused on the different Chinese and American cultural values with polar orientations. The Chinese Value Survey (CVS), was developed by Bond and his research colleagues in an organization known as the Chinese Culture Connection to measure cultural values within the cultures influenced by Confucian ethos (The Chinese Culture Connection, 1987). They identified 40 value items to use as Chinese values in response to Western value studies (Bond, 1988; Bond & Pang, 1991; Matthews, 2000). After comparing these 40 Chinese value items with American values as identified in Hofstede (2011)'s work and American core values identified by Moran et al. (2014) and Griffin and Pustay (2007), and excluding the common values (eg. working hard, knowledge) and unmatchable values (eg. saving face, having few desires), seven Chinese values were left. These values were matched with American values into seven pairs of polar values to describe the difference in values between American culture and Chinese culture. The pairs are family orientation and individual orientation, relationship by status and equality, competitiveness and non-competitiveness, prudence and adventurousness, thrift and leisure, respect for tradition and modernity, sexual conservatism and sexual liberation.

Television is a provoker of cultural meanings and pleasures within society, therefore its transmission is a crucial part of social structure and reflects the dominant ideology in a nation (Fiske, 2011). The



mainstream cultural values influence the creation of television series and hence their audiences (Zhao, 2012). In this sense, the significant polar values are reflected in American TV series and Chinese TV series. The Chinese audiences may perceive different cultural values through these two kinds of television series and hold different attitudes toward them. Many scholars have mentioned that the characters and cultural settings are the bearers of audiences' perceptions of cultural values, so audiences' attitude towards these value references should also be taken into consideration (Dorfman & Mattelart, 1975; Medrano et al., 2011; Pasquier, 1996). Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural values and references are reflections of television content, which are indicators to find out whether the realities and cultural values that are reflected in American TV series are different from those shown in Chinese TV series.

### **3.6.1 Chinese cultural values and orientations**

Traditional Chinese culture is widely recognized as being built upon a value system that crystallized in Confucianism. In the past two thousand years, Confucianism has shown its 'elasticity' through interpretations (Tu, 1985) and continuously influences and strengthens the Chinese cultural value system. Confucianism originated from the teachings of Confucius and permeates into every aspect of daily life; it shapes Chinese people's preferences, priorities, and values, and it prescribes the proper modes of conducts and interactions with others (Rozman, 2002). Confucian values and norms have maintained a powerful dominance in the region since their emergence more than two thousand years ago, and have remained entrenched within Chinese history and culture. Values such as filial piety, respect for authority, and self-cultivation have combined and given rise to a regional political culture unique to China (Sin, 2012).

The seven Chinese values fall in three out of four CVS value factors. The four CVS value factors are CVS I (integrity and tolerance), CVS II (Confucian ethos), CVS III (loyalty to ideals and humanity), and CVS IV (moderation and moral discipline) (Matthews 2000; The Chinese Culture Connection 1987). Family orientation, non-competitiveness, and sexual conservatism belong to CVS I (integrity and tolerance). Relationship by status, thrift, and respect for tradition belong to CVS II (Confucian ethos). Prudence belongs to CVS IV (moderation and moral discipline). However, it is easy to understand why there are no values that fall in CVS III (loyalty to ideals and humanity), because it is a category for universal values including kindness, patience, courtesy, sense of righteousness, and patriotism. The Chinese Culture Connection (1987) proposed these CVS value factors in response to the oriental dimension that was filtered out by Western culture studies. The following will explain the specific values chosen as indicators of Chinese cultural value.

### *Family orientation*

Family orientation refers to the value that emphasizes family as the core of social relations and that personal achievement should conform to family interests. Chinese cultural values emerge from and sustain an Eastern world-view and pattern of behaviours (Frankenstein, 1997). Chinese society is structured as clan-like networks, with close family members positioned in their cores. The concept of ‘family’ goes beyond strict biological relations (Luo, 1997) and can be considered as a set of concentric circles of networks. Chinese ethnocentrism is deeply rooted in the family; most or all of the cultural values that Chinese individuals hold originate exclusively from the family and develop largely within the solidarity of the family context (La Barre, 1946). Filial piety, a principle that governs the parents’ and children’s relationships, constitutes a cardinal value of Confucianism (Pan et al., 1994).

**It is essential to note that family and kinship relations, not the educational systems, pass on heritage** and tradition to Chinese children. The family bonds and responsibilities play an important part in relations between family members. Family teaches children the importance of loyalty, obedience, and filial piety within a role-bound network (Hsu, 1981b) as well as the virtues of restraining their individuality and the necessity of maintaining harmony with each other (Hofstede & Bond, 1988). Family members cultivate an interconnected sense of self (Hsu, 1981a) and the social order of the family serves as the prototype for conduct in all Chinese organizations (Chen & Chung, 1994).

### *Thrift*

Thrift refers to the value that emphasizes living a simple life and saving spare resources for future needs. Thrift is considered as a core Chinese value (Bond & Hofstede, 1989; Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Hofstede & Hofstede, 1991; Leung, 2006). For instance, Chinese household savings keep a record high in the world (Ma & Yi, 2010; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2017) and Chinese save about four times as much of their household income as Americans do (Graham & Lam, 2003). Thrift and frugality has a remarkable practical impact on Chinese social life. In China, there was a precept that said ‘when fortune comes, do not take too much advantage of it’, which warns people be cautious about spending money (Lin, 1939). Even in the 1960s and 1970s, a wedding ceremony for new couples was held at home with meals or simple tea gatherings (Faure & Fang, 2008).

The old ways of consumption still influence the spending habits of the majority of people in this ancient and prudent culture, and the Chinese have learned from history that nothing is certain, and

that emergencies can arise suddenly. Furthermore, the Chinese focus their family loyalties on the extended family instead of limiting them to the nuclear family (Voskuil, 2011). Chinese families commonly spend money to help a cousin-in-law or a grandparent. Their consumption is focused on savings for future security and on products and services that pay off in the long run, such as education, housing, and investments (Voskuil, 2011). Nowadays, Chinese people are willing to spend more money for products to show their affluence, but they still practice thrift in purchasing private products (Lin et al., 2013).

#### *Respect for tradition*

Respect for tradition refers to the value that people are proud of their historical heritage, including traditional views that formed a long time ago. The qualities of being historical, time-honoured, and legendary are venerated (Cheng, 1997). Experiences and historical legacy compose Chinese traditions and culture. For instance, traditional Chinese culture respects the importance of rites, which are passed on from generation to generation. These special rites are prepared for various occasions, such as the emperor's sacrifice to heaven, the common people's sacrifice to their ancestors, weddings, funerals, and courteous exchanges. Even in Chinese modern cities, people still keep some traditional rites although in different ways. Chinese young people advocate traditional Chinese medicines, food and philosophy. Tradition is regarded as the wisdom of their ancestors, which should be passed on to future generations.

Tradition is a set of pre-existing values and materials that are particular to a culture. In the practice of the traditions, these pre-existing values are considered as being of greater importance than people's individual tastes, and this constructs the standards of the relative success or failure of their deeds. There is a concept that a tradition is important by channelling the past to the present and is considered as a form of identity-making (Green, 1997). Chu (1993) has found that most Chinese people in his research responded that they are proud of China's historical heritage. Eisenstadt (1968 p. 280) points out that the Chinese heritage has been of great importance in shaping the destiny of China's encounter with modernity.

#### *Non-competitiveness*

Non-competitiveness refers to the value that strengthens and maintains harmonious relations with others. This value is rooted in many other Chinese cultural values. Harmony is one of them. Harmony means proper and balanced coordination between things and encompasses rationale, propriety, and compatibility. Modern Chinese society tries to maintain harmony between humankind

and nature, people and society, members of different communities, and mind and body (Zhang, 2013a). The value of harmony advocates that people are to avoid conflicts and cooperate with each other rather than compete. According to Neuliep (2014), non-competitiveness, with other cultural values such as harmony with others, humbleness, loyalty to superiors, and solidarity are among the most valued characteristics of a Chinese person (Neuliep, 2014).

Non-competitiveness also relates to obedience. Because of the Confucian teachings' emphasis on social order and harmony, traditional Chinese culture values obedience and conformity, which has weakened the spirit of competition. For example, in the Chinese family, parents have traditionally been extremely concerned about their children's behaviour being culturally appropriate and socially desirable. Therefore, Chinese children are taught obedience to their parents and elders, and to follow their guidelines without any objection and challenge (Xiao, 2001), which contributes to the formation of non-competitiveness in the culture.

### *Prudence*

Prudence refers to the value that danger or risk is undesirable and should be completely removed. Prudence has its own inherent logic in the Chinese cultural context: to be safe to the greatest possible extent. Prudence is a primary virtue in agriculture, simply because cultivating land for a long period of time with almost no reward until harvest requires extraordinary endurance, sacrifice, and discipline (Li, 2014b).

Under the traditional education of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, Chinese conduct themselves with modesty and prudence (Jiang, 2009). Lin (1939) observes that the Chinese were deprived of an 'instinct for adventure', and exposing oneself was an unreasonable attitude, an unwise stand. Chinese culture values stability, continuity, tradition and experience. Nowadays, the attempt to innovate requires Chinese people to take some risks. In this case, learning from the past and being prudent is the easiest way to deal with problems in life and society. Chinese people believe that too much prudence cannot harm, but taking a risk always results in mistakes.

### *Relationship by status*

The relationship by status refers to the value that emphasizes people should construct their social networks under a hierarchy system. The core of the Confucian system was built on a linear hieratical family and political structure (Liu, 1987). This hierarchy was featured by various dominance-obedience relationships: male dominating female, elders dominating young people, and the emperor

dominating everyone else (Pan et al., 1994). This hierarchy consisted of clearly defined roles, responsibilities, rituals, and customs to manage the interactions among the designated positions at various levels. This elaborate construction rests upon the foundation of the Confucian conception of kinship relationships.

Respect for seniors and hierarchy is a hallmark of traditional Chinese culture (Faure & Fang, 2008). In this highly structured Chinese society, every individual has a defined role. In the *Words of Confucius*, there is an saying: ‘let the ruler be a ruler, the minister be minister, the father be a father, and the son be a son’, which shows the restricted social structure (Chan, 2008). Age is also respected because it is associated with wisdom. Chinese society tends to have a certain contempt for immature enthusiasm; the young are taught not to talk while their elders are speaking (Lin, 1939).

#### *Sexual conservatism*

Sexual conservatism refers to the value that sex is a cultural taboo and should be bound to marriage. Where male-female relationships are concerned in China, there is an integrated set of traditional values to express family responsibilities and avoid the topic of sex: the superiority of men, the chastity of women, and lifelong submission to the family (Pan et al., 1994). Under the influence of Confucianism, romantic love between husband and wife was considered detrimental to the supremacy of filial piety between the parent-son relationships (Baker, 1979). Because marital relations were part of one’s filial duty to parents, the roles to continue the family line and to make the family prosperous are more important than for the husband and wife relationship itself (Baker, 1979).

Sex is a prohibitive cultural schema in China. Most Chinese still believe that thinking and talking about sex is ‘dirty’ and ‘bad’, even between married couples (Ran, 2005). Chinese families, schools and society have taught people to think like this. Therefore, many Chinese people have grown up in total ignorance of sexual knowledge (Ran, 2005). The Chinese also emphasize the importance of decent young people not mingling or falling in love until they have built their career. Premarital sex was forbidden for both genders, but the rule was more strictly enforced for girls than for boys (Chang et al., 2014).

### **3.6.2 American cultural values and orientations**

America is a heterogeneous country, and thus culture cannot be treated as a single entity. Although American culture, like others in Western civilization, contains no elaborated value systems based

upon kinship clans (Williams, 1970), two hundred years of cultural development have shaped some characteristic cultural values such as individualism, quality, and freedom (Hsu, 1981a; Johnson & Svara, 2011; Naylor, 1998; Williams, 1970).

The seven American values cover all six of the categories in Hofstede (2011)'s division of cultural values, which are based on power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism or collectivism, masculinity or femininity, long-term versus short-term orientations, and indulgence versus restraint. Hofstede refers to power distance as the extent to which less powerful members of society accept the fact that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, 2001). Among the selected values, equality is the representative value index in this category. By uncertainty avoidance, Hofstede means the extent to which the society attempts to overcome anxiety by eliminating uncertainty (Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, 2001). Adventurousness belongs to this category. Individualism and collectivism refers to the degree to which individuals comprise social groups (Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, 2001). Individual orientation belongs to these types of values. By masculinity and femininity, he means that due to biological differences the sexes have had emotional and social roles assigned to them (Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, 2001). Competitiveness belongs to this category. Long-term versus short-term orientation, based on the society's time horizon, attaches more importance to the future or the present and the past (Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, 2001). Leisure and modernity fall into these types of values. Indulgence versus restraint refers to the degree to which individuals of a society try to control their desires and impulses (Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, 2001). Sexual liberation belongs to this category. The following will explain the specific values chosen as indicators of American cultural values.

#### *Individual orientation*

Individual orientation refers to the value that emphasizes the individual's interests in a society. It can be found in the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Bill of Rights*, which form an integral part of the *Constitution* (Hall, 2011). Americans believe that the protection of the individual will guard democracy from intrusion by the government. Historian Bernard Bailyn states that in the American political tradition there is a strong scepticism towards the government (Bailyn, 1992). The emphasis on individual achievement in America originated from the Calvinist belief that each individual is equal in the God's eyes and can achieve whatever they desire by work hard (Weaver, 1999). Many Americans see the individualism as a major cultural reason for the greatness of the United States (Hofstede, 2001). Among individualists, social behaviour is guided by one's personal attitudes, motivations, and other internal processes (Neuliep, 2014). Individualistic cultures treasure and

reward an individual's uniqueness. The United States, for example, is full of contests and ceremonies that recognize individual accomplishment (Neuliep, 2014).

### *Leisure*

Leisure refers to the value that emphasizes chasing material comfort in life. The rich resources of America, along with its developed economy, have brought a widespread wealth of material goods. There has been a wholesale development and diffusion of the marvels of modern comfort (Arensberg & Niehoff, 1975). The high value placed on such comforts has caused industries to be geared to produce ever-greater quantities and improved versions of existing products. Americans seem to feel that they have a 'right' to such amenities.

Achievement and success are measured by the quantity of material goods one possesses, both because they are abundant and because they indicate how much money an individual earns (Cohen, 1971). With improved economic and living standards, materialism, consumerism and hedonism emerged in American cultures (Morley, 2013). People enjoy leisure through consumption and material comfort.

### *Modernity*

Modernity is regarded as future-oriented, emphasizing the notion of being new, up-to-date, and ahead of the times (Pollay & Gallagher, 1990). In general, Americans are less concerned about history and traditions than people from older societies (Althen, 2005). In the political realm, modern society is characterized by wide participation on the part of citizens. It is culturally dynamic, and oriented to change and innovation instead of being bound by old customs and conventions (Eisenstadt, 1968).

Modernity is also marked by industrialization, urbanization and secularization (Carvounas, 2002). America was characterized by prosperity, technological advances, and consumerism, and experienced major shifts in values toward modernity in the 1920s (Dumenil, 1995). The urban population has outnumbered the rural population ever since. As more people moved to large cities, like New York and Chicago, a way of life emerged that was significantly different from the rural society. This modernity within urban culture became the hallmark of American culture (Sullivan, 2013).

### *Competition*

Competition refers to the value that underlines the assumption that people have an equal opportunity for success and the only way to achieve it is to compete with others. Americans view competition as a method to bring out the best from any individual. They assert that competition challenges or forces each person to produce the very best that is humanly possible (Sondhi, 2007). Consequently, competition is fostered in the American home and classroom, even at the youngest age levels.

Americans value competition, and not only on an individual level; they have also devised an economic system to go with it—free enterprise. They feel strongly that a highly competitive economy will bring out the best in its people, and ultimately, the society that fosters competition will progress most rapidly (Sondhi, 2007). Evidence exists that Americans prefer to use free enterprise as an approach to manage fields as diverse as medicine, arts, education, and sports.

### *Adventurousness*

Adventurousness refers to the value that risk and change is unavoidable in life, and people should use them to achieve. Adventurousness, or risk-taking, is an important American value. During the 1700s and 1800s, there was little physical mobility in Europe. Immigrants to the US were willing to leave their homeland and travel half way around the globe while knowing that 20 percent of them would die on journey (Weaver, 1999). They risked their lives to go to the ‘New World’ chasing religious and political freedoms. Most importantly, there was opportunity to gain a large amount of wealth if one was willing to take the risk to go to the ‘New World’. The willingness of the individual to take risks is a basic aspect of American culture even today (Weaver, 1999). This adventurousness is crystallized in the ‘American Dream’, which assumes that economic advancement and success can be achieved through creativity and innovation, and risks are a necessary component.

In the American mindset, change is an indisputably good situation. Change is strongly linked to development, improvement, progress, and growth (Kohls, 2007). Many older, more traditional cultures view change as a disruptive, destructive force that should be avoided as much as possible. Instead of change, such societies value stability, continuity, tradition, and a rich and ancient heritage—none of which is valued very much in the United States (Kohls, 2007).

### *Equality*

Equality refers to the value that emphasizes every individual is equal in a society. It is stated in the *Declaration of Independence* that all men are created equal, and this value has helped perpetuate the



idea that America is the land of opportunity (Wallace, 2003). The image of the proud 'common men' crystallized when the President Andrew Jackson was elected by the male suffrage in 1828. Similar progress was made by the national women's suffrage in 1920. After the American Civil War (1861-1865), slavery was terminated and African Americans slowly achieved rights that were equal to white Americans'. Americans believe that they are free to rise as high as they can, no matter what one's social position may be in the US. In theory, they believe that everyone should have an equal opportunity for success (Wallace, 2003).

Egalitarian values have meant that Americans maintain an informal attitude when they communicate with others. Regarding kinship relationships, between two immediate generations, adult children are expected to be independent both economically and socially. Male-female relationships in the United States are not governed by strong kinship obligations to either the fraternal or the maternal side. In many respects there is literal equality between wife and husband (Pan et al., 1994). American people call each other by their first names, behave casually, and wear informal attire. The important guest's seat is normally located at the head of the table around the world; however, the American guest sometimes prefer to sit at the end of the table to socialize with the crowd. It contrasts well with the Chinese style of seating that follows a strict hierarchical order (Hall & Hall, 1990; Samovar et al., 2009).

### *Sexual liberation*

Sexual liberation refers to the value that sex is as casual as other human behaviours. The origin of this American value could trace back to the 1920s, which was a decade with a distinctive cultural edge, during which ideas about morality shifted as much as the economy (Sullivan, 2013). Young women in the 1920s began taking claim to their own bodies and engaging in a sexual liberation within their generation. Many of the ideas that fuelled this change in sexual mores were already emerging in intellectual circles in New York before World War I, through engagement with the works of Sigmund Freud, Havelock Ellis, and Ellen Key. These thinkers acknowledged that sex was essential to the human experience. They proposed that women were sexual beings who have impulses and desires just like men, and considered the restraint of these impulses as self-destructive (Sullivan, 2013). By the 1920s, these ideas had come into the mainstream culture.

The sexual landscape in America transformed over time, but it was still more liberated than other countries (Okazaki, 2002; Vance, 1991). Mainstream society set the tone for proper sexual expression. When change really began to shape American sexual culture in the 1960s, the change

was sparked by the small radical groups of society. Sex became something that expressed how a person was feeling and moving into the public sphere (Emoore, 2013).

### **3.7 The significance of this study**

The social and cultural condition of China is distinct from the United States, which provides a good context to conduct this cross-culture study. Chinese culture is impacted by the West in China's process of modernity. Chinese modernity has been a blending of aspects from both the East and the West, such as traditions and Westernization (Escobar, 1995; Lo, 2009; Ma, 2001). However, while American television products are based on reality, it is a dramatized and exaggerated reality. Chinese viewers who have never been to America may think that what they see in American television shows is an accurate reflection of American culture. This kind of cultivation could affect their expectations regarding Chinese culture and American culture, which may influence their cultural identity and values.

Although there are many studies on the way that the media affects cultural values, few of the studies take cultural identity into consideration. The media's impact on cultural identity does not mean the cultural identity of Chinese audiences will totally transform into American ones, but rather may make them adjust their priorities and view American culture and lifestyles as superior to their own culture. There are studies that have touched on the first order of the cultivation effect, whereby American television nurtures viewers' perceptions of American affluence, which associated with lower appreciation of their own countries. The present study attempts to go deeper to investigate whether this cultivation impacts the viewers' cultural identity and values. Cultural values define the identity of a culture, therefore the influence of the media on cultural values also represents an impact on cultural identity.

Previous studies have largely focused on traditional television audiences rather than online viewers. The media landscape in China has change very fast, and these changes have also altered the content and viewing experience. Nowadays, the audience can choose the content and watch whenever they want to on the Internet, which could cause different media effects compared with those identified in the television era. Because audiences can adjust their own viewing behaviour, rather than accepting what they see on broadcast television, it is important to retest cultivation effects in this new media context.

The gratifications of audiences could also be an important factor in studying media effects. Gratification could moderate or mediate the effects of American TV series on Chinese audiences. The Chinese people who watch American TV series for entertainment may not take what they see on television as seriously as the people who watch American TV with the purpose of learning do. Against this background, this study bring light to understanding the mediating influence that gratifications can have on the cultivation effect.

For empirical implications, most studies refer to the popularity of American TV series in China as either cultural imperialism or soft power and claim its impact on Chinese audiences without providing reliable evidence. Both cultural imperialism and soft power underline the influence on the preference of American images and values among people in other nations (Boyd-Barret, 1977; Nye, 2004, 2010; Siu-Nam Lee, 1988). This study focuses on the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences' perception of cultural values and identity, and could be considered as an empirical case study on these two approaches to cultural study.

### **3.8 Discussion and conclusion**

This chapter examined literature that was relevant to the dissertation's key questions. It reviewed three approaches: cultivation, the firewall model, and the U&G approach, which provides a theoretical framework guides the research in this study. Under the cultivation approach, this study emphasizes the active role of the media and studies the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences' perception of reality and cultural values. Using the firewall model, this study stressed the roles of societal and individual firewalls in limiting the viewing of American TV series in China. Under the U&G approach, this study highlights the active role of the audience and studies the mediating influence of gratifications on media effects. These approaches are useful in providing a full picture of the impact that viewing American TV series can have on Chinese audiences' cultural values and identity.

After reviewing the literature, this study found that scholars believe that the viewing of American TV series leads to the favouring of American culture and the weakening of native cultural identity in a variety of countries. In the case of China, studies have found a relationship between viewing American TV series and the eroding of certain Chinese cultural values. Moreover, the Chinese government assumes that American TV series, a vessel for delivering American cultural values, endangers Chinese traditional values. This study therefore proposes some potential hypotheses for research questions.

One of the main focuses in this chapter is to review the studies examining the media effects related to cultural identity. Scholars from both the communications and psychology fields affirm that the media influences people's formation of their cultural identity (Chen, 2012; Wilson & Donnan, 1998; Jensen et al., 2011). Their studies have conceptualized different patterns of impact that global culture, and mainly American culture, have had on other countries, including assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. The scholars have also noted that people mainly form their cultural identity between 18 and 25 years of age (Arnett, 2000; Valde, 1996). Studies related to American TV series in China report that the Chinese audiences of American TV series are mainly within the age group of 18 to 25, an age group that is open to the influence of the media on their cultural identity (Luo, 2006; Wen, 2008).

In order to discuss the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences' cultural identity, this study has focused on two aspects: the audiences' perceptions of cultural realities and their perceptions of cultural values. In Chapter One, four research questions are listed. In this chapter, several hypotheses that under the four research questions are proposed.

First, American TV series and Chinese TV series reflect different cultural values and realities. The literature of cultivation theory suggests that Chinese audiences who watch American TV series have a positive attitude towards the US and American people, while Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series have a positive attitude towards China and Chinese people. Those Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are more likely to favour American values than those who watch Chinese TV series. And, on the contrary, those Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series are more likely to favour Chinese values than those who watch American TV series. These differences may also show in audiences' attitude. Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are more likely to be positive towards American values than those who watch Chinese TV series. Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series are more likely to be positive towards Chinese values than those who watch American TV series.

Another essential focus in this study is to review the studies on the difference between Chinese and American values via the cultural index that is used in this study. The seven pairs of Chinese and American values cover the main differences in cultural dimensions that have been proposed by scholars in cultural studies (Bond, 1988; Griffin & Pustay, 2007; Hofstede, 2011; Moran et al., 2014). These values and their cultural orientations have been explained in detail in this chapter.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this dissertation will address four central questions. The first of these asks, “How do Chinese and American TV series reflect cultural realities and values?” To address this question, this dissertation poses four hypotheses:

- 1) *Hypothesis 1.1*: Chinese audiences who watch American TV series have a positive attitude toward the US/American people.
- 2) *Hypothesis 1.2*: Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series have a positive attitude toward China/Chinese people.
- 3) *Hypothesis 1.3*: Chinese audiences are more likely to identify American values through watching American TV series than watching Chinese TV series, while Chinese audiences are more likely to identify Chinese values through watching Chinese TV series than watching American TV series.
- 4) *Hypothesis 1.4*: Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are more likely to be positive toward American values than those who watch Chinese TV series, while Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series are more likely to be positive toward Chinese values than those who watch American TV series.

Second, the societal and individual firewalls have limited Chinese audiences’ viewing of American TV series in China. The next question this dissertation assesses is, “Do individual and societal firewalls limit the impact of American TV series?” The literature of the firewall model, as proposed by Norris & Inglehart, has been reviewed in this chapter.

Third, there is a link between the consumption of American TV series and Chinese audiences’ perceptions of cultural values and realities. The Chinese viewers are more likely to favour American values and less likely to hold Chinese values than non-viewers do. For those viewers who watch American TV series, heavy viewers and long-term viewers are more likely to favour American values and less likely to hold Chinese values than light viewers and short-term viewers do. In other words, the consumption of American TV series causes the adoption of American values among Chinese viewers, thus weakening the Chinese viewers’ perceptions of Chinese values and reality.

This chapter also reviews the literature related to cultivation theory and questions that included the relationships between media consumption, cultural identity, and values.

The research question “Does viewing American TV series affect Chinese audiences’ perceptions of cultural realities and values” was refined in five hypotheses:

- 1) *Hypothesis 3.1:* Viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than non-viewers do.
- 2) *Hypothesis 3.2:* Heavy viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than light viewers do.
- 3) *Hypothesis 3.3:* Long-term viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than short-term viewers do.
- 4) *Hypothesis 3.4:* Heavy viewers/ long-term viewers are more likely to believe what they saw on American TV series are real and less likely satisfied with Chinese reality than light viewers/ short-term viewers do.
- 5) *Hypothesis 3.5:* Viewing American TV series strengthens Chinese audiences' perceptions of American cultural values and realities, but weakens their perceptions of Chinese cultural values, and weakens their satisfaction with Chinese reality.

Fourth, the different types of gratifications that Chinese audiences have sought from viewing American TV series may cause differences in their perceptions of cultural values. Chinese viewers who watch American TV series for language and cultural learning purposes may take what they see on TV more seriously than those who watch American TV series for the purpose of sharing popular topics with friends. The different perceptions of cultural realities could further influence their perceptions of cultural values. The literature discussing uses and gratifications theory that relates to the research question "How do Chinese viewers seeking different gratifications from viewing American TV series differ in their perceptions of cultural values" is reviewed in this chapter. One hypothesis was posed under this research question.

- 1) *Hypothesis 4.1:* Chinese viewers who seek one type of gratification (learning/ entertainment/ sociability/ escape) are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than viewers who seek other types of gratifications (learning/ entertainment/ sociability/ escape).

By reviewing studies in related fields, this chapter summarized the significance of these study. This study has provided a comprehensive exploration on the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences' cultural values and identity using both the firewall model, cultivation, and the U&G approaches within an online context. Cultural values are a pivotal index of the culture, and the impact of American TV series on cultural values may indicate the series' influence on the whole culture. The loss of cultural values may cause confusion among people in one country as they cannot understand right and wrong according to values within their cultural context. This study helps

researchers to understand and clarify the impact of American culture on Chinese audiences' cultural identity.

## Chapter 4 Methodology

“The strategy for measuring mental programs has to use forms of behavior or outcomes of behavior. The behavior used in research could be the ones that was stimulated for the research purpose or natural ones that would happen regardless of the research. Besides, the behavior could be in either the form of words or deeds. The best way to ensure sufficient validity in the social science research, where we cannot directly measure the constructs, is to use more than two different approaches at the same time and explore the convergence between these approaches.” (Hofstede, 2001)

-- Geert Hofstede, a Dutch social psychologist

### 4.1 Introduction

The methodologies of this dissertation are used to address the key questions based on an empirical study that examines the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences’ cultural identity and values. Hofstede (2001) claims that empirical research should analyze either provoked (stimulated by the researcher for the purposes of the research) or natural (taking place or having taken place regardless of the research and the researcher) behavior, which can be verbal (words) or nonverbal (deeds). He also points out that the best strategy to ensure validity is to use one of the provoked verbal methods (interview, survey, projective test) and at least one nonverbal method (content analysis, direct observation, field experiments) (Hofstede, 2001).

Provoked verbal methods involve the participation of researchers, who could directly get the answers from the participant’s inner mindset. However, some questions may inevitably lead the participants to surmise the researcher’s expectations and follow the ideas of majority groups due to pressure for social consensus. Combining provoked verbal methods with other types of methods could compensate for the defect of insufficient validity. This study adopts both provoked and natural words to ensure sufficient validity. Overall it employs four methods: content analysis, survey, experiment, and in-depth interview. These methodologies have been designed to progressively answer the same research question: whether viewing American TV series affects Chinese audiences’ cultural values and identity. The triangulation of methodologies in this study is shown in Figure 4.1.



First, the researcher uses content analysis to study the differences between Chinese audiences' comments on American TV series and Chinese TV series in relation to cultural values. The differences are sought through an analysis of online comments. Kluckhohn (1967) has argued that nearly all our mental programs (such as attitudes and beliefs) carry a value component. Content analysis is an applicable quantitative approach used to study written language (Zito, 1975). The written material, it is assumed, shows the intention of the communicators. Therefore, content analysis is used in this study to decipher cultural values in written text (Khairullah & Khairullah, 2003; McGowan, 2000; Tsao, 1994). Different cultural products are supposed to represent different cultural values based on their cultures. When audiences encounter cultural values similar to or different from their own cultural values, they could make judgments. These judgments, along with the viewers' attitude toward these values reflect their value systems. Chinese viewers share their thoughts, attitudes and opinions by posting comments on the Internet. It is assumed that using content analysis to analyze the comments can identify the values that are reflected in Chinese viewers' comments. This study focuses on the difference in Chinese audiences' judgements when engaging with TV series from two different cultures. It is assumed that their attitudes toward both countries and both peoples reveals the Chinese viewers' cultural identity.

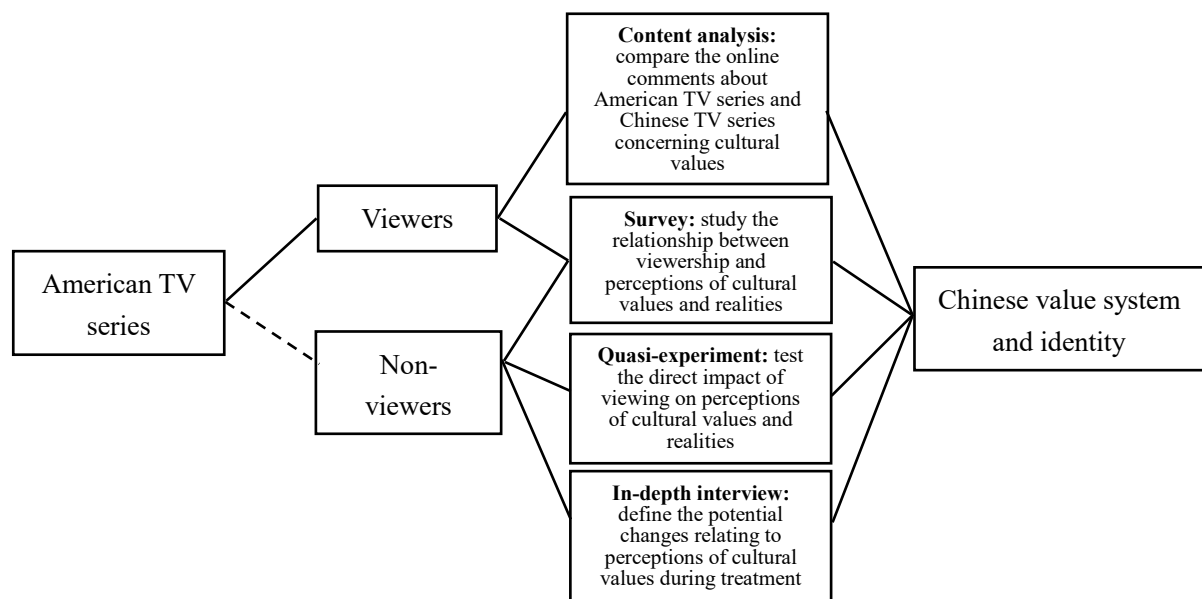
Second, a survey is conducted to assess whether viewing American TV series leads Chinese viewers to adopt American values. Questionnaires designed to survey values abound in the US social science literature as a logical consequence of US empiricism (e.g. Harrison & Huntington, 2000; Hofstede, 1998; Ralston et al., 1997). In addition, questionnaires designed not for measuring values but for measuring such constructs as beliefs, attitudes, and personality can also be used to infer values (Hofstede 2001). The analysis of the survey data revealed the relationship among the Chinese viewership of American TV series, the gratifications sought, and viewers' perception of cultural values and reality.

Third, this dissertation employs a quasi-experimental study to test the link between the audiences' perception of cultural values and their viewing of American TV series. Fiedler and Chemers (1974) suggest that self-description attitude measurements provide valid predictions in experimental circumstances. There is a wide range of literature about experimental approaches to detect the change of cultural values (Chuah et al., 2014; Olivas-Luján et al., 2004; Rosenblatt et al., 1989). In this study, the quasi-experiment conducted an analysis of Chinese audiences who had never seen American TV series before and required them to view American series as treatments. The analysis compared the data between different treatment procedures to pin down the changes in participants'

attitudes toward cultural values, their perception of American and Chinese realities, and their self-esteem regarding being a Chinese person. Also, a control group was recruited for comparison with the treatment group. This determines whether viewing American TV series could be directly linked with potential changes in attitudes to values during the experiment.

Finally, in-depth interviews were conducted with the treatment group to understand in more depth about the Chinese viewers' changes in attitude regarding cultural values. The answers to questions about cultural values from participants are helpful in explaining the impact of American TV series on them. Gubrium (2012) suggests that an in-depth interview can trace people's personal beliefs, such as an individual's values and decisions, ideology, cultural knowledge, or perspective. The in-depth interviews in this study used questions tailored to certain American TV series and occasions, which allowed participants to freely express their opinions about potential changes in opinion regarding their cultural values and identity. The in-depth interviews are used to understand the pattern of these potential changes during the treatment process.

**Figure 4.1 Methodology map in this study**



In general, a convergent mixed method design was used in this study to address the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural realities and values. Convergent mixed method is a type of design in which quantitative and qualitative data are collected in parallel, analyzed separately, and then merged (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, content analysis is used first to test whether American and Chinese TV series reflect different cultural

realities and values. This is followed by an online survey to find the relationship between viewership, the types of gratifications sought by the viewers, and Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural realities and values. Next, quasi-experimental research is used to test the relationship between watching the American TV series and any changes in the Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural realities and values. Finally, qualitative research involving in-depth interviews is used to explore the changes and changing patterns in the experiment participants' perceptions of cultural realities and values during the treatment period. This provides a more comprehensive understanding of the interactions between Chinese values and American values among Chinese audiences. The reason for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data is that it can provides confirmation of findings, more comprehensive data, increased validity, and an enhanced understanding of the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012; Foss & Ellefsen, 2002).

In Chapter 3, the research questions and hypotheses are elaborated. This chapter will explain the research methods used to answer these research questions. The outline of the research questions and hypotheses that fall under each research method is showed in Table 4.1. This study received Human Ethics approval from University of Canterbury.

**Table 4.1 Research questions, research hypotheses and the methodologies used in this study**

N	Research questions and hypotheses	Research methodology
1	<p><b>How do Chinese and American TV series reflect cultural realities and values?</b></p> <p><i>Hypothesis 1.1:</i> Chinese audiences who watch American TV series have a positive attitude toward the US/American people.</p> <p><i>Hypothesis 1.2:</i> Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series have a positive attitude toward China/Chinese people.</p> <p><i>Hypothesis 1.3:</i> Chinese audiences are more likely to identify American values through watching American TV series than watching Chinese TV series, while Chinese audiences are more likely to identify Chinese values through watching Chinese TV series than watching American TV series.</p> <p><i>Hypothesis 1.4:</i> Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are more likely to be positive toward American values than those who watch Chinese TV series, while Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series are more likely to be positive toward Chinese values than those who watch American TV series.</p>	Content analysis

2	<b>Do individual and societal firewalls limit the impact of American TV series?</b>	Survey & quasi-experiment
3	<p><b>Does viewing American TV series affect the Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural realities and values?</b></p> <p><i>Hypothesis 3.1:</i> Viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than non-viewers do.</p> <p><i>Hypothesis 3.2:</i> Heavy viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than light viewers do.</p> <p><i>Hypothesis 3.3:</i> Long-term viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than short-term viewers do.</p> <p><i>Hypothesis 3.4:</i> Heavy viewers/ long-term viewers of American TV series are more likely to believe what they saw on American TV series are real and less likely satisfied with Chinese reality than light viewers/ short-term viewers do.</p> <p><i>Hypothesis 3.5:</i> Viewing American TV series strengthen Chinese audiences' perceptions of American cultural values and reality, weaken their perceptions of Chinese cultural values, and weaken their satisfaction of Chinese reality.</p>	Survey & quasi-experiment
4	<p><b>How do Chinese viewers seeking different gratifications from viewing American TV series differ in their perceptions of cultural values?</b></p> <p><i>Hypothesis 4.1:</i> Viewers seeking one type of gratification (learning/ entertainment/ sociability/ escape) are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than viewers who seeking other types of gratifications (learning/ entertainment/ sociability/ escape).</p>	Survey
5	<b>What are the changes in participants' understanding of cultural values and identity during treatment?</b>	In-depth interview

## 4.2 Content analysis

### 4.2.1 Overview

Content analysis is primarily a quantitative method of describing and categorizing messages in specific contexts (Berelson, 1971; Krippendorff, 2004; Neuendorf, 2002). Content analysts suggest that any careful researcher can discover the nature of a message through precise, systematic,

repetitive observations. The goal of quantitative content analytic research is to sort messages into categories and compare the frequency with which different categories of messages occur.

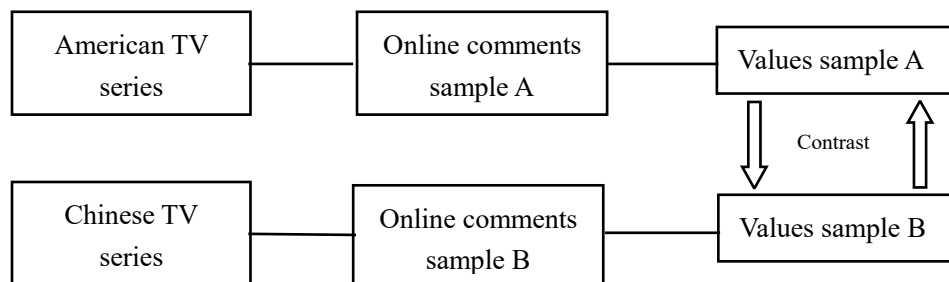
From its beginning, content analysis has been a legitimate way of analysing the content of the media. In the early 1900s, as newspaper production and distribution in the United States expanded, so did the number of analytical content studies (Merrigan & Huston, 2009b). Later in the twentieth century, as radio, movies and television grew more accessible and popular, analytical content methods were applied to those media (Merrigan & Huston, 2009b). For more than 60 years, content analysis has been the primary research methodology used to analyse newspaper articles and editorials, talk radio, television, film and Internet content in order to make quantitative judgments about trends in coverage (Cho & Cheon, 2005; Druckman, 2005; Haigh et al., 2005; Ivory, 2006; Kerbel & Bloom, 2005). All of these studies — from song lyrics to radio communications to trends in how issues are covered in broadcast, print media, or on the Internet — involve analysing the content of textual and visual data (Merrigan & Huston, 2009b).

Content analysis is commonly used in audience studies to analyse the attitudes and ideas of audiences. Riffe et al. (1998) suggest that content analysis can be used in media effects research. Weber (1990a) and Krippendorff (1980a) define content analysis as a process to make valid deductions from data gathered from context. Holsti (1969) refers to content analysis as a method for making inferences by determining the specified features of messages in an objective way. Now, content analysis is frequently used in analyses of newspapers, television, film, websites and other media. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2014), the aims of this research method are to analyse the content, for determining the deductions from the data, and construct a foundation for media effects.

Content analysis is used in this study to evaluate the attitudes of Chinese audiences regarding Chinese and American cultural values by analysing their comments about two different cultures' TV content, as shown in figure 4.2. As one of the most influential US cultural products, American values are embedded in American TV series. When Chinese audiences view American TV series, it is assumed that they identify these American values. Likewise, they could identify Chinese values by viewing Chinese TV series. In our analysis, we assume that these identified values are reflected in online comments written in Chinese fan pages. The judgments and comparisons of values reflect the Chinese TV viewers' perceptions of cultural values. To understand these perceptions of the two different cultures' TV content, the researcher uses content analysis to discover the difference

between the audiences' attitudes towards cultural values. This is conducted by comparing the comments from two groups, one of which watches American TV series and the other that watches Chinese TV series. Furthermore, the audiences' attitudes toward both countries and both peoples, it is assumed, helps to explain how the audience thinks about themselves, which is part of their cultural identity.

**Figure 4.2 Content analysis comments on American TV series and Chinese TV series**



To answer the research questions mentioned earlier in relation to content analysis, the researcher gathered 1,080 online comments with value propositions about American television series and Chinese television series, giving a total of 540 comments for each, respectively. The television content used to analyse cultural values are three most popular American TV series in China. The popularity of these shows is defined by the number of their viewers, based on statistics from the major Chinese video websites in 2013-2014. Then, the researcher selected three popular Chinese TV series that match the genres and topics of the American TV series. The researcher sampled viewers' comments from four kinds of websites: online communities, fan groups, video websites, and Weibo. In order to cover the major websites on which Chinese audiences have posted comments, comments were gathered from four websites as data for the present study:

Online communities are fans' opinion-sharing venues. Baidu Post Bar is the biggest online community in China, and is part of the largest search engine Baidu, the Chinese equivalent of Google. According to statistic from China Internet Network Information Center (2014a), 86.7 percent of Chinese Internet users use Baidu as their main search engine. Baidu Post Bar is the largest online community in China with more than 8 million forums. Under Post Bar's American or Chinese TV shows theme, the audiences can discuss anything about the show. The most important feature of this kind of website is the interaction between viewers. When a viewer puts a post on the front page of the Post Bar, other viewers can post their feedback under the original post.

Fans' group are online places for audiences to post comments and TV reviews. Douban, a film and television review site, offers both short comments (a single paragraph) and long comments (television review articles). Douban is a main review-based social network in China (Roberg, 2014). It is a Chinese social network site (SNS) that specializes in forming discussion groups to share their thoughts on films, television, and books (Roberg, 2014). Compared to other sites, this kind of site focuses on members who write TV reviews.

Video websites enable viewers to comment on videos. There are six major Chinese video websites that stream American TV series. All of them have purchased licenses from American TV companies, and they have online places for audiences to comment on their favourite shows. Sohu is one of the largest American TV content streaming sites in China. The comments sections for these American TV series displays the ideas that Chinese audiences shared after they have viewed the shows.

Weibo empowers their audience to share their ideas and thoughts. Weibo is the Chinese version of Twitter; it has become the premier platform for important political and social discourse in China (TechInAsia, 2015). It is one of the most important social media websites in China, and reported 222 million monthly active users worldwide in 2015 (China Internet Watch, 2016). The comments about American series that Chinese audiences share are short as posts are limited to 140 characters, like Twitter. However, Weibo also allows users to post long texts called long Weibo through add a link of Weibo blog or a photo with the texts.

Most Chinese audiences watch American TV programs via streaming and downloading online. The audiences' comments that are posted on these websites are the sources for gathering information on viewer attitudes. This is the first step in getting a glimpse of the influence that American TV shows have on Chinese viewers' cultural identity and values. The timeline of the comments is set at 2014 –the year the selected seasons of the television series were released in China. These comments were stratified by month and the first four comments in each month was drawn from these four websites. To be selected, comments needed to include a judgment on American or Chinese culture, and America and American people or China and Chinese people.

#### **4.2.2 Sample collection**

For this study, as mentioned earlier, three shows were chosen from the top ten rated American TV

series of the 2013-2014 television season in China (HJEnglish, 2013a; b also see Appendix A). The shows were comedy series, *The Big Bang Theory*; a fantasy series, *Arrow*, and a drama series, *House of Cards*. This study also selected three popular Chinese TV series, the family-themed series, *To Elderly with Love*; the espionage thriller series, *Lurk*; and the historical series, *Empress in the Palace*, respectively, as counterparts to studying the American series. The reason for choosing these three genres of Chinese TV series is based on popularity and Chinese television production. SAPPRFT reports that 52.3 percent of the Chinese series produced in 2015 are reality-themed which includes family-themed series; 47 percent of the TV series are historical series, and the other popular genres, including espionage thrillers, are 1.8 percent of the series (Wang & Sun, 2016).

*The Big Bang Theory* is a situation comedy about the dynamics between four scientists and a waitress who has not finished community college. This show conveys the idea that ‘smart is the new sexy’, which attracts many Chinese viewers. It was shown exclusively on Sohu, and the seventh season accumulated 115 million plays (Cendrowski, 2014). However, SAPPRFT banned *The Big Bang Theory* without giving any explanation (Mozur, 2014b). *The Big Bang Theory* inserts many Chinese cultural elements, from food to language, and the Chinese audiences seem like it (Osnos, 2014).

*Arrow*, is a fantasy and superhero TV series adapted from DC Comics’ character *Green Arrow*. This show includes some Chinese cultural elements, which have been the subject of heatedly discussed by Chinese audiences. For instance, the main character, Oliver Queen, drifted into an island in the South China Sea and met a Chinese soldier who taught him martial arts, which helped him become a vigilante. The third season even set the story in Hong Kong; the Chinese medicine, architecture, actors, and even Oliver’s body (tattooed four Chinese characters) triggered discussions among the Chinese audience (Wu, 2013).

*House of Cards*, a Netflix political drama, shows the power battles in Washington, the US capital. The story centres on Frank Underwood, a House Majority Whip, who initiates a thorough plan to get himself into the powerful position of being the US president. This show does not avoid the politically sensitive areas between China and America, such as cyber espionage, corruption, exchange rate manipulation, rare-earth resources conflict, and island disputes between China and Japan. Not only did Chinese audiences like this show, even Chinese politicians such as Wang Qishan, the former vice-premier of finance and now the ultimate arbiter for discipline on the Communist party’s standing committee, is said to favour *House of Cards* (Campbell, 2014). *House of Cards* is



so popular that it has been put into the Chinese national civil service exam, which lets exam candidates answer the question of why American TV series are popular around the world (Bu, 2014).

Moving to the Chinese TV series, *To Elderly with Love* is a story centered on the issue of younger generations' responsibility to take care of their elderly generation. The aging society and one child policy makes this issue more urgent for Chinese families to face, as the sandwich generation must look after both their children and their aging parents. This series focuses on the relationship between generations and the conflicts caused by family responsibilities; the series has raised heated discussions online. This series won the Chinese national TV series award, Flying Apsaras Award, in 2015.

*Lurk* is a story set in the time of the Chinese civil war and concentrates on the espionage wars between the Communist Part of China (CPC) and the Nationalist Party of China (NPC). It is about a military intelligence officer in the NPC who is abandoned his party to help the CPC with military information. This series has fuelled the popularity of espionage thrillers in China and has won many Chinese TV awards, such as the Flying Apsaras Award and the Magnolia Award.

*Empress in the Palace*, which is adapted from an Internet novel, tells a story about power battle in the imperial palace of Chinese Emperor Yongzheng during the Qing Dynasty. It focuses on how Zhen Huan, the Emperor's concubine, fights her way out of the fierce infightings in the harem and become the Empress. This show has won several national TV awards, including China TV Golden Eagle Awards and rankings at the top of Chinese television. It not only popular in mainland China, but also gained popularity in Japan and has streamed on Netflix since 2015.

The data for analysis in this study, as mentioned, is not the television series itself, but the comments of Chinese audiences on the television series. Television viewers tend to sharing their views and values they have identified from TV shows on their online comments (Costello & Moore, 2007; Wohn and Na, 2011). In this case, one could content analyse the comments on social media to detect Chinese audiences' attitudes toward both American and Chinese cultural values. This is useful, because these online comments are direct reactions stimulated by viewing TV series. The online comments represent the natural behaviours of audiences within the context of the TV series.

#### **4.2.3 Unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis for the content analysis is each comment in the Chinese websites mentioned

earlier regarding American and Chinese TV series that contained a specific reference to cultural values. The value references include the US, American people, China, and Chinese people. Any comment without such a reference was excluded from the sample. The comment should refer to at least one of the cultural values mentioned earlier. These include the “American values” of individual orientation, leisure, modernity, competition, adventurousness, equality, and sexual liberation, and “Chinese values” of family orientation, thrift, respect for tradition, non-competitiveness, prudence, relationship by status, and sexual conservatism.

The comments were divided into 12 groups based on the month of posting during 2014. According to this timeline, four comments from each month were chosen in the sample. This added up to a sample of 1,152 posts (4 comments  $\times$  4 websites  $\times$  12 months  $\times$  6 shows). The number of comments was evenly drawn from the four websites (Baidu Post Bar, Douban, Sohu, and Weibo) until the number reached 1,080. To ensure the validity of this study, a second coder coded 22 percent of the same sample (240 comments). The following table shows the number of comments on these four websites.

**Table 4.2 The total number of comments posted by show by website in 2014**

Sources	The Big Bang Theory	House of Cards	Arrow	To Elderly with Love	Empress in the Palace	Lurk
Baidu Post Bar	2,488,603	143,395	861,160	45,513	965,864	488,491
Douban	92,969	35,721	6,319	2,534	112,357	65,945
Sohu	75,101	12,797	19,756	2,341	25,175	1,149
Weibo	12,243,551	7,734,917	3,186,471	997,647	6,048,680	14,617,128

#### 4.2.4 Coding instrument and measures

The coders were provided with a code book (see Appendix C) and an Excel coding sheet (see Appendix B). The code book contained variable columns in which values for each variable were selected based on the code book instructions. For each unit of analysis, the variables of reference, target of comment, tone regarding the target, the overall value and its tone by comments, separated values involved by sentence were coded. For every comment on the list, there were 15 code items.

*Program Measures.* The website that the comment came from were labelled by the researcher, using '1' for Baidu Post Bar, '2' for Douban, '3' for Sohu, and '4' for Weibo. The name of the television programs was labelled by the researcher, and the coders coded *Empresses in the Palace*, *Lurk*, and *To Elderly with Love*, as '1' for Chinese series, and *The Big Bang Theory*, *House of Cards*, and *Arrow*, as '2' for American series. Also, the coders coded the comments as '1' for the show, which designates comments on the television series as a whole without discussing any details of the content; '2' for characters, which contains comments or judgements on main characters of the show; '3' for storyline, which designates comments on the plot or development of the story; '4' for real world, in which the post comments on the cultures that appeared in the show; and '5' for posts that comment on other issues.

*Identity Measures.* The coders coded the subjects of comments, as '1' for America, in which the post comments on America, as a nation or country; '2' for Americans, in which the post comments on American characters, television stars, and people in general; '3' for China, in which the post comments on China, as a nation or country; '4' for Chinese, in which the post comments on Chinese characters, television stars, and people in general; '5' for comments on other subjects.

The coders also coded the tone towards the subject of comments, using '1' for positive, comments that contain positive expressions about the subject, such as using favourable words as admire, love, support, strong, good, have potentials; '2' for neutral comments, containing neither positive nor negative expressions, or when the tone is unclear; and '3' to indicate a negative tone, using negative expressions about the subject, such as using unfavourable words including disgust, villain, resentful, disregard.

*Value Measures.* The coding items in this analysis were based on the seven pair values that were used to define the differences between Chinese culture and American culture in the literature review. The seven pair values are individual orientation and family orientation, leisure and thrift, modernity and respect for tradition, competition and non-competitiveness, adventurous and prudence, equality and relationship by status, and sexual liberation and sexual conservatism.

To ensure the validity of the value measures and avoid an ambiguous coding scheme, the cultural values measures were adapted from those in existing published studies (the content studies of cultural values in television commercials), which reported high reliability (Chan & Cheng, 2002; Cheng & Schweitzer, 1996; Lin, 2001). After these are described, they are presented in tabular

format (Table 4.3) below.

Values in comments were measured in two steps. The first step was evaluate and code the overall value of each comment, and to code the attitude towards them. This shows the priority of value judgement in each comment. The second step was to code every value statement in the comments. This shows the density of value judgment in these comments. By doing both, it is possible to find the difference in value judgement between Chinese audiences who comment on American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment on Chinese TV series.

Firstly, coders coded the overall value according to each comments and the tone of the comment. The overall value was defined by the key value in the topic sentence or the main idea in their comment; the coders used '1' for individual orientation, '2' for family orientation, '3' for leisure, '4' for thrift, '5' for modernity, '6' for respect for tradition, '7' for competition, '8' for non-competitiveness, '9' for adventurousness, '10' for prudence, '11' for equality, '12' for relationship by status, '13' for sexual liberation, and '14' for sexual conservatism. The coders also coded the tone towards this value, using '1' for positive, a post that contains a favourable expression; '2' for neutral, a post that contains neither a favourable nor an unfavourable expression; and '3' for negative, a post that contains an unfavorable expression. The tone indicates the commenter's attitudes toward the overall cultural values.

Second, the coders coded every value that is mentioned in the comments. The values were categorized into seven pairs. In coding value category one, the coders used '1' for individual orientation; '2' for a neutral orientation, which stand for an unclear attitude between the two values; and '3' for family orientation. In coding value category two, '1' stands for leisure, '2' stands for neutral, and '3' stands for thrift. In coding value category three, '1' represents modernity, '2' represents a neutral orientation, and '3' represents respect for tradition. In coding value category four, '1' indicates competition, '2' indicates a neutral orientation, and '3' indicates non-competitiveness. In coding value category five, '1' stands for adventurousness, '2' stands for neutral, and '3' stands for prudence. In coding value category six, '1' represents equality, '2' represents a neutral orientation, and '3' represents relationship by status. In coding value category seven, '1' indicates sexual liberation, '2' indicates neutrality, and '3' indicates sexual conservatism. Specific cultural values in the comments were coded to demonstrate all those values that audiences preserved from selected television series.

**Table 4.3 Description of cultural values examined in Chinese audiences' comments**

American Values	Description and examples	Chinese Values	Description and examples
Individual orientation	<p>Comments emphasize how to achieve a personal goal by individual effort and put the individual's achievement first.</p> <p>'In <i>House of Cards</i>, Claire wants to take back her 200,000 dollars of equipment. But in order to achieve this she sacrificed her husband's interests.'</p> <p>'Frank would achieve his goals by all means, even unethical means. But he did achieve his goals and clear away all the obstacles on his way to success.'</p>	Family orientation	<p>Comments that advocate family values and that personal achievement and success should secondary to the family's interests.</p> <p>'In today's episode of <i>Elderly with Love</i>, I learned that as a wife, I should be nice to my husband and dedicated to my family. There is nothing more worthy than making efforts for the family.'</p> <p>'Do not say that Americans do not value families. There are lots of family-themed American TV series. They reflect the value that family always comes first.'</p> <p>'The main character, Mr. Lue, in <i>To Elderly with love</i>, he dedicated all his love to the family with multiple elders and his baby daughter even when life is tough for him. I was touched by his dedication to the family.'</p>

Leisure	<p>Comments emphasize luxury merchandise and lifestyles with admiration.</p> <p>‘I accidentally found out that Raj wears Gucci shoes, and he is a rich man. But why did he not buy Gucci outfits to match his shoes? It is hard to understand.’</p> <p>‘The Big Bang Theory became so rich due to the popularity of the show. They have so much money to burn that they changed their laptop to the luxurious newest version of HP Alienware.’</p> <p>‘What I care about is the main character’s Lamborghini.’</p>	Thrift	<p>Comments include spending money reasonably and with caution.</p> <p>‘The clothes that actresses wear in The Big Bang Theory are very simple. Penny’s dressing could barely fit different occasions and Bernadette’s dresses are always in the same style. But this thrifty style did not influence their prettiness.’</p> <p>‘What I have learned from <i>To Elderly with Love</i> is that when we are young, we need to earn more money and save for my old age.’</p>
Modernity	<p>Comments emphasize new things, change, creation and innovation.</p> <p>‘A lot of jokes in <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> are based on the stereotypes of scientists and females. But popular culture should be renewed all the time. It will be better in this way.’</p>	Respect for tradition	<p>Comments agree with following the rules of tradition or emphasize historical heritage.</p> <p>‘<i>The Empresses in the Palace</i> stands out from so many costume drama in its usage of traditional poetry and Kunqu Opera. The traditional singing, dancing, martial arts,</p>

	<p>‘The most memorable line in <i>House of Cards</i> is ‘to improve is to change, to perfect is to change often’, I cannot agree more.’</p>		<p>music instruments in this series appears much noble and graceful than others.’</p> <p>‘Be kind to elders is our Chinese tradition, our young generation should be following this tradition and treat elders well.’</p>
Competition	<p>Comments emphasize achieving goals through competition and realizing personal values through competition.</p> <p>‘After I watched the first season of <i>House of Cards</i>, I think the writer is very familiar with art of war. The political competition is fierce and exciting. The competition is like the war of Three Kingdoms in China.’</p> <p>‘In <i>House of Cards</i>, all I see is competition. No matter what a high position you are in, you will be put down if you are weak.’</p> <p>‘Frank’s success in Congress should be attributed to his competitive character. The competitive people are good</p>	Non-competitiveness	<p>Comments emphasize inner peace, keep harmonious relationships with others, and avoid compete with others, such as friendship is more important than competition.</p> <p>‘All competitive persons in <i>Empresses in the Palace</i> are tragic characters, and even Zhenhuan is no exception. Even though she won at last and became the Empress, however, she lost her husband, friends, and being lonely in this world, what a tragedy. She should have kept peace with others.’</p> <p>‘Everyone thinks they are the smartest and compete with others about this or that. This makes people exhausted both physically and mentally. See what happened in the show, it</p>

	at the political games.’		is not worth competing with others for the love of Emperor, status, and wealth.’
Adventurousness	<p>Comments emphasize change and risk-taking.</p> <p>‘The main characters in <i>Arrow</i> are all born in rich families. However, they not only reject their wealth but also try to overturn their families and assets. They just got bored and want to have adventurous lives.’</p> <p>‘I think the audiences of <i>House of Cards</i> want to see a Frank get rid of all his opponents and go straight to be the president with risks rather than being cautious, hard-working and achieving nothing.’</p>	Prudence	<p>Comments advocate stability and harmony in doing things.</p> <p>‘I think the main character was much happier before she was chosen to go into palace, although she is not beloved by the Emperor and living a poor life, but she did not have to make scheming, and she could enjoy the tranquility of live.’</p> <p>‘She (Zhenhuan) does not care about the fame and wealth from the start, she just wants to live a safe and peaceful life.’</p>
Equality	<p>Comments emphasize that all men are equal. It does not matter if social status is higher or lower, people are equal.</p> <p>‘The relationship between Claire and Frank is equal. Claire does not want to be normal. Only Frank knows her ambition. They have the</p>	Relationship by status	<p>Comments emphasize following the order of social status in a relationship. For example, men dominate women and the old dominate the young.</p> <p>‘The low social status of Ms. An Linrong and her family determined her low position in the Palace.’</p>



	<p>same goal in life.'</p> <p>'What I love in <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> is the equal relationship between people.'</p>		<p>'Television series is the reflection of a society. In relate to status, the boss will always be the boss, no matter how unwilling you are to follow their orders, but you have to.'</p>
Sexual liberation	<p>Comments emphasize that sex is a basic human right. Love is more important than marriage.</p> <p>'Zoe took her own body as her weapon. It is only thing she can defend herself from the power of Frank. Zoe is not Frank's love, she is his puppet.'</p> <p>'The <i>Arrow</i> made me realize that women treat sex so casually in the US and I admire that.'</p>	Sexual conservatism	<p>Comments about sex is something that must be done behind closed doors within the bounds of marriage.</p> <p>'Love is the foundation of sex. They could have lot of fun when they are young. But they have to keep a solid relationship after married.'</p> <p>'I cannot accept the Emperor flirting with so many women, what a womanizer!'</p>

#### 4.2.5 Inter-coder reliability and coding procedure

Reliability is fundamental for content analysis, and is commonly accepted in many fields of study (Lombard et al., 2002). Krippendorff (1980b) points out that there are three factors used to test reliability in the context of content analysis: stability, reproducibility, and accuracy. Stability is the degree to which the process is constant and invariant over time. Stability is the process of testing and retesting, with coding process considered to be stable if the later retest result matches with the test result for coding the same content. Reproducibility, also referred to as intercoder reliability, is the degree to which a process can be reproduced under different circumstances, at different places, or among different coders. Reproducibility is the test process used between different coders; data

was considered to be reliable if all the coders' results match each other. Accuracy is the degree to which a process abided by its specifications that it was created to follow. Under the accuracy test, the coding result was compared against a standard to define its reliability. Accuracy is the strongest method to test reliability, but a test-standard is not always created (Krippendorff, 2012). Under this circumstance, reproducibility is generally considered a more effective method to test reliability (Krippendorff, 2012; Potter & Levine - Donnerstein, 1999).

Intercoder reliability was calculated by determining the percentage of agreement in the coding decisions among coders, and estimating the degree to which coders' level of agreement differs from the level of agreement likely to occur by chance alone (Lombard et al., 2002). Cohen (1960)'s kappa is one of the methods used to calculate the agreement coefficients that provide beyond-chance indicators. In addition, Cohen (1960) recognized the limitation of his measure on expected agreement by chance, but as Perreault and Leigh (1989) mentioned, Cohen's major concern was in psychological studies as there have often been clearly established information to guide observations among coders. However, this is not the case in media and communication studies (Lombard et al., 2002). Moreover, several scholars have noted Cohen's kappa as the most widely used reliability coefficient (Banerjee et al., 1999; Perreault & Leigh, 1989).

This study adopted Cohen's kappa to analyse the agreement coefficient between the researcher and one coding assistant to define the reliability of the data. Before the coding process, the researcher developed a coding manual and instructions to guide the coding assistant. The coding assistant is a postgraduate student from Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan, China. The training session took two hours per day for a week. The coding items, structure, and instructions were clarified during the coding practice. The researcher made efforts to improve the coding assistant's understanding of the coding process, analytical techniques, and value items.

After the training was completed, the researcher and the coding assistant coded a set of comments separately to determine the degree of agreement. The researcher and coding assistant coded the same 240 comments, which became the basis for the intercoder reliability. This sample represented 22 percent of the total 1,080 comments used in the study. General text books on social science research mentioned that the acceptable number of the subsample size used in reliability assessment should be between 10 to 25 percent of the total sample (Neuendorf, 2002; Wimmer & Dominick, 2013). Cohen's kappa was calculated by Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to assess the intercoder agreement. The individual kappa coefficient assessment of each items is: issue, .879;

target of comment, .903; tone towards the target, .815; overall value, .824; tone towards overall value, .809; value category one, .861; value category two, .826; value category three, .864; value category four, .805; value category five, .836; value category six, .851; value category seven, .811. The kappa coefficient assessment shows a strong agreement between the researcher and the coding assistant (kappa < .59, weak level of agreement; kappa = .60 to .79, moderate level of agreement; kappa = .80 to .90 strong level of agreement; kappa > .90 almost perfect level of agreement) (Lombard et al., 2002; McHugh, 2012; Wimmer & Dominick, 2014).

The researcher and coding assistant went through sample of comments to ensure the objectivity of the coding process and reduce the coders' subjective bias (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991). After the intercoder reliability test, the researcher coded the full number of comments (1,080).

#### **4.2.6 Pilot study**

A pilot study was conducted before the entire sample was analysed. The pilot study tested 120 comments about three American TV series from four Chinese websites. These comments fit the sampling design and turned out to offer useful lessons before the full sample was coded. The pilot study was crucial for coders to understand the cultural values described in audiences' comments. The pilot study also helped to refine the coding categories for the coding design and manual.

Firstly, the codebook used three-point Likert scales to categorize the cultural values. The three-point Likert scales allowed the coders to evaluate the audience's attitude as positive, neutral, or negative. It also categorised the paired polar values as one polar value (such as competition), neutral, or the other polar value (such as non-competitiveness). The coding design used a three-point Likert scale, rather than five or more points, because the intensity of the value perceptions in the comments is hard to determine. For instance, an audience may show their preference for the adventurousness of the main character, but it is difficult to define the intensity of this preference. In this way, the three-point Likert scale is easier to handle and ensures a higher degree of confidence than five or more point Likert scale.

Second, this study was initially designed only to code Chinese audiences' attitudes toward American values. However, the polar values used also reflected the difference between the two cultures, and therefore the coding results could reflect audiences' priorities in their value systems as they chose to comment on one value rather than another. This shows the audiences' preference for specific values. Moreover, the pilot study found that the audiences not only stated the overall values in the

topic sentences, but also stated other values in the supporting sentences. In this case, the researcher coded the overall values that set the tone in the topic sentence, and also coded the values in each sentence separately.

## **4.3 Survey**

### **4.3.1 Overview**

Surveys allow researchers to understand the opinions of a large population with a relatively small sample (Berger, 2014). In general, using a questionnaire as a survey tool enables researchers to efficiently gather large amounts of information from the respondents in a short period of time (Ackroyd, 1992). This method was adopted in order to explore the differences in the perception of values among Chinese audiences with different consumption of American TV series, and to reveal the dynamic between media effect and audiences' gratifications. There are no official statistics available showing the total number of American TV series viewers in China. However, it has been estimated from the registered membership of major American TV fan clubs that there are more than 24 million US TV viewers in China (Chen, 2013). Therefore, a questionnaire was chosen as the best instrument to survey a large enough sample to represent this population (Gannon, 1973).

Online streaming is the main way to view American TV series in China, so an online survey was used in this study. The administration of online surveys has been discussed extensively in the literature (Czaja et al., 2014; Nesbary, 1999; Schmidt, 1997). As the number of Internet users in the world is increasing every year, researchers are using Internet tools such as e-mail and web-based surveys more frequently. According to Dillman (2000), the most significant advances in the survey methodology during the twentieth century were the introduction of random sampling in the 1940s and telephone interviewing in the 1970s. Researchers today are witnessing similar advances in the field of survey methodology with the introduction of technology-based Internet surveys (Cobanoglu et al., 2001). Kaplowitz et al. (2004) studied web and mail surveys and argues that the web survey can achieve a comparable response rate to a questionnaire delivered by mail. Barber et al. (2013) compared online surveys and face-to-face surveys and found they could generate similar results. Smith (2001) describes the big challenge with online survey as representativeness, which depends on the reliable estimates of population parameters. Manzo and Burke (2012) argue that low response rates threatened the validity of the survey, but the availability of the Internet has increased the response rate in web-based surveys. Above all, representation is more important than the response rate in a survey.

Although online surveys face a lot of challenges, Couper (2000) argued that if a survey is targeting Internet users, it is still beneficial to employ this method. For Chinese audiences, the major means to access American TV series is the Internet. This makes an online survey more appropriate than other research survey methods, because it captures the entire population of interest. Traditional surveys offer greater representation of an entire population; however, the population of this study is solely Internet audiences. Furthermore, Czaja et al. (2014) mentions that academic research can tolerate imperfect samples. In part, this is because academic research tends to study relationships, which are resistant to sampling bias (Czaja et al., 2014).

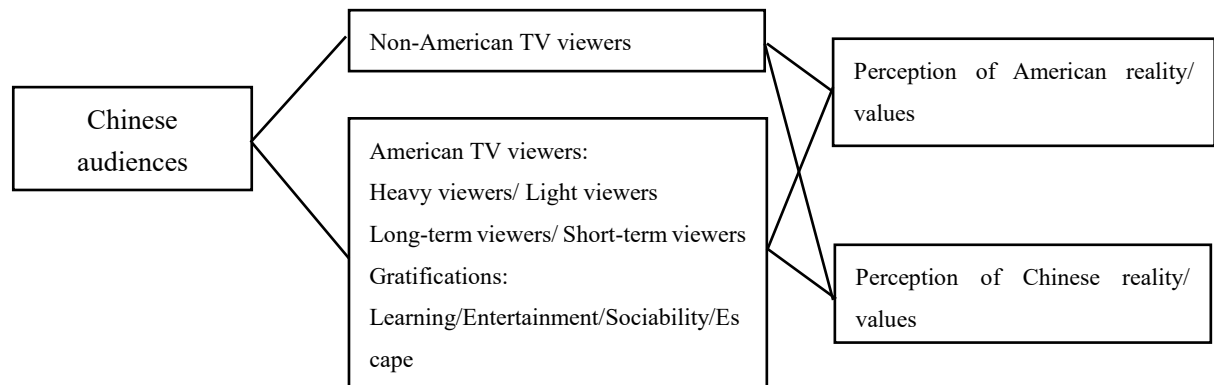
The survey process in this study is shown in Figure 4.3. In cultivation research, there are two kinds of dependent variables. First-order cultivation refers to effects on social perceptions, while second-order cultivation refers to effects on attitudes and values (Arendt, 2010). These two types of cultivation-related effects have different underlying mechanisms. For first-order judgments, the effect is influenced by individuals' memories, which means that the accessibility of information when they construct their judgments is very important. This accessibility may also have an unwanted influence from television viewing, as individuals need to retrieve information other than that which is most accessible when attempting to formulate a judgment. The influence of viewing American television on Chinese audiences' perception of American reality belongs to the first-order cultivation effect. The volume of American TV series that watched by the viewers matters. The more American television series the Chinese audiences watch, the more information about American culture they obtain. The frequent receiving this information may lead the audience to believe what they saw on television and therefore modify their perception of American reality.

In contrast, second-order cultivation judgments are influenced by the program content during viewing. Television viewers may need to reassess their values after viewing the TV shows and attempt to adjust for unwanted influences. They may also actively counter-argue and resist particular messages that they may be unconsciously adopting during viewing but which are antithetical to their personal values and beliefs, although admittedly the latter is likely to produce an unsatisfying viewing experience. The viewers should make judgments during this process and adjust their own values. In the survey, cultural values as the second-order cultivation are also tested.

This study also considered the gratifications of viewing American television to see whether people seeking different gratifications are different in their perception of cultural values. This is because different gratifications may influence the viewers' perceptions of reality differently, which may

further influence their judgments about values. This is called the mediating and moderate influence of viewers' gratifications on cultivation effects.

**Figure 4.3 Survey process in this study**



According to our understanding of cultivation theory, the more American TV series Chinese audiences watch, the more likely they are to adopt American cultural values. The audiences were divided into four groups based on viewership: heavy viewers, light viewers, long-term viewers, and short-term viewers. Their opinions toward American values and Chinese values were surveyed to see if heavy viewers and long-term viewers favour American values more than other groups. Moreover, the survey intended to find out whether heavy viewers and long-term viewers are less favourable towards Chinese values than other groups. Another group, non-viewers, who have never seen American TV before, is also included in this study as a reference to see whether American TV viewers are more favourable to American values than non-American TV viewers. If viewership could predict American cultural values, it means the more American TV series audiences view the more likely they are to adopt American cultural values. If viewing American TV series leads to negative perceptions of Chinese cultural values, it means that Chinese audiences are separating themselves from traditional Chinese values. If viewership leads to positive perceptions of Chinese cultural values, it means that the individual firewalls were effective and Chinese audiences are understanding American TV series based on Chinese cultural frameworks and their value system is not affected. If viewership could predict part of the Chinese cultural values and part of the American values, it means Chinese audiences' values systems are absorbing and hybridizing with American cultural values. However, if viewership could not predict cultural values, it means that viewing American TV has no impact on Chinese audiences' cultural values. For this reason, the gratifications that Chinese audiences have identified from consuming American TV series is used as variables to cross-study the perceptions of cultural realities and values.

### 4.3.2 Population, sample and sampling method

As mentioned above, it was estimated that China has more than 24 million US TV viewers (Chen, 2013). As mentioned, survey researchers can generate representative results within a reasonable margin of error for an entire population through sampling (Krosnick, 1999). A sample is a subset or model of a population that is used to gain information of the entire population (Henry, 1990; Vignoles et al., 2011). The sample size is important as an insufficient sample does not obtain enough representation of the entire population to produce scientific results (McCrum-Gardner, 2010).

To make sure there is adequate representation, the best method is to use random selection or another probability sampling method (Merrigan & Huston, 2009a). There is no readily available sampling frame for Chinese audiences of American TV series. The online survey in this study was designed on and distributed by Sojump.com, a Chinese survey website, which has 20 million users<sup>3</sup>. To keep the sampling representative, the survey sample consisted of two groups. One was selected through Sojump's platform by advertising the survey. A second was created based on sending individual invitations to the survey on Sojump from those whose comments were analysed in the content analysis. An invitation with the survey link was sent to the participants via the websites' messenger system. These participants represent a more active audience. However, passive audiences who do not engage in sharing opinions such as these participants who did the survey through the advertising on Sojump are also included in this study.

The survey involved a number of recruitment efforts:

- 1) Private messaging individuals whose comments were content analysed with a link back to our survey.
- 2) The online survey invitation was sent to American TV fan groups such as the QQ group by email. QQ is one of the most popular instant messenger programs in China and it reaches 63.5 percent of Chinese internet users (Cecilia, 2014).
- 3) The link to the survey was posted to the online forums of six major video websites to survey the audiences who stream American TV shows online.
- 4) The link to the survey was also posted on forums for subtitle groups, social media to target the audience who download American TV series. The invitations posted on these websites clearly told potential participants that it was a study about viewing online American TV series.

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<sup>3</sup> The information was based on the official websites of Sojump.com (问卷星), <https://www.sojump.com>; they start use a new domain (<https://www.wjx.cn>) since 19 September, 2017.

This online survey was also supported by Sojump.com, as the survey was distributed from Sojump.com's survey centre and promoted to Sojump's users. From early March 2016 to the end of May 2016 there were 3,268 responses to the online survey. To use the most reliable responses, 61 participants with repeated IP addresses (multiple answers from the same household, and presumably the same person), 137 participants below 18 years of age, 48 overseas participants, and 9 participants whose geographic locations were unknown were removed from the sample, leaving 3,015 valid responses.

### **4.3.3 Questionnaire, measures, reliability and validity**

This study adopted a self-administrated questionnaire to gather findings. Wolf (2008) refers to a self-administered questionnaire as a questionnaire that has been designed specifically to be completed by a respondent without intervention by the researchers. The design of questions in this questionnaire closely corresponds to the research questions and hypotheses. The questionnaire includes four parts: Section A focuses on American television viewership and motivations of watching American TV series; Section B measures Chinese audiences' perception of American reality and their cultural identity; Section C tested Chinese perceptions of their own cultural values and American cultural values; and Section D gathered demographic data from the viewers (Appendix D).

To ensure the validity and reliability of this study, the questionnaire was designed with simple and clear instructions (Nestor & Schutt, 2014), and avoided asking two questions at once or switching questions back and forth (Merrigan & Huston, 2009a). A pre-test or pilot study was run before conducting the full survey. The samples in the pre-test, which were used to test for clarity, are not part of the final sample.

The survey was designed in English, then translated into Chinese. The Chinese version of the questionnaire was used for the pilot study to improve the semantic validity of the survey before it was fully executed. The welcome statement and invitation letter clearly mentioned that the online survey would be investigating the Chinese audience's exposure to American television and its perceived impact on them. The letter also mentioned that participation was completely voluntary and anonymous.

*Viewing preference.* In assessing the viewer's preferences, respondents were asked: 'do you watch American TV series?' Non-American TV series viewers were only assessed according to cultural



values and their perception of Chinese reality. The data of American TV series viewers was separated from non-American series viewers. Of the respondents, 2, 509 reported that they watch American TV series and 506 reported that they do not watch American TV series.

*Viewership.* The viewership was measured by the total viewing time and length of viewing. The total viewing time was measured by asking respondents to recall the total time the spent viewing American TV series on an average weekday, and on typical weekends and holidays. The answer was on a scale ranging from 1 (rarely), 2 (less than one hour), 3 (one hour or more, but less than three hours), 4 (three hours or more, but less than five hours) to 5 (five hours or more). The mean value shows that the average respondents were watching American TV series for less than one hour on an average weekday ( $M=2.64$ ,  $SD=1.08$ ), and more than one hour but less than three hours on typical weekends and holidays ( $M=3.04$ ,  $SD=1.10$ ). By merging the two measurement, the Cronbach's Alpha was .776, which means the two items have enough reliability and internal consistency, and thus could be merged into one variable ( $\alpha < .50$ , unacceptable reliability;  $.60 > \alpha \geq .50$ , poor reliability;  $.70 > \alpha \geq .60$ , questionable reliability;  $.80 > \alpha \geq .70$ , acceptable reliability;  $0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$ , good reliability;  $\alpha \geq 0.9$ , excellent reliability) (DeVellis, 2012; Pallant, 2010). The length of viewing was measured by asking respondents how long they have been watching American TV series on a scale ranging from 1(0-3 months), 2 (3-6 months), 3 (6-12 months), 4 (1-2 years), 5 (2-3 years), 6 (3-4 years), 7 (4-5 years), to 8 (more than 5 years). The mean value shows that the average respondents watched American TV series for 1-2 years ( $M=4.71$ ,  $SD=1.94$ ).

*Perception of American reality.* In assessing perception of American reality, respondents were asked, 'how accurate do you think American TV series reflects US society and culture?' The results were measured on a 10-point scale, from 1 (not at all accurate) to 10 (very much accurate). The mean value shows that the average respondents think American TV series reflect US society and culture a little accurately ( $M=5.72$ ,  $SD=1.93$ ).

*Gratifications.* The gratifications was measured by Jiang and Leung (2012)'s scale of Chinese viewers' gratifications sought from viewing American TV series. The Cronbach's Alpha of the items for entertainment ( $\alpha=.92$ ), learning ( $\alpha=.87$ ), sociability ( $\alpha=.92$ ), escape ( $\alpha=.83$ ) shows the high reliability of the items measured. The measurement of gratifications was used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), to 5 (strongly agree). The mean value shows that the average respondents are more likely to watch American TV series for learning ( $M=3.78$ ,  $SD=0.78$ ) and entertainment ( $M=3.74$ ,  $SD=0.74$ ) than sociability ( $M=3.61$ ,

SD=0.78) and escape (M=2.94, SD=0.84).

*Cultural values.* The measurement of seven Chinese values (family orientation, relationship by status, non-competitiveness, prudence, thrift, respect for tradition, sexual conservatism) was adapted from Chinese Culture Connection (1987)'s Chinese Value Survey (CVS) by ask the respondents about each values' importance within statements and descriptions on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree/not at all like me), 2 (disagree/not like me), 3(neutral/some-what like me), 4 (agree/like me), to 5 (strongly agree/very much like me). The measurement of seven American values (individual orientation, equality, competition, adventurous, leisure, modernity, sexual liberation) was adapted from Hofstede (2001)'s research comparing cultural values by accessing respondents' opinion about each item on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree/not at all like me), 2 (disagree/not like me), 3 (neutral/some-what like me), 4 (agree/like me), to 5 (strongly agree/very much like me). The reliability tests Cronbach's Alpha conducted to measure Chinese values and American values were  $\alpha=.71$  and  $\alpha=.70$ , respectively, which shows as reliably measured items. The overall Chinese value and the overall American value were the mean score of seven Chinese values and seven American values, respectively. The mean value shows that the average respondents are a little more favorable towards the overall American value (M=3.60, SD=0.51) than the overall Chinese value (M=3.27, SD=0.53).

*Perception of Chinese reality.* In assessing perceptions of Chinese reality, respondents were asked to report their satisfaction with the Chinese economy, society, culture and being a Chinese person on a 10-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (very much satisfied). The reliability test conducted to measure Chinese reality was .76, which is above the acceptable reliability standard. The mean value shows that the average respondents' satisfaction with Chinese culture (M=3.28, SD=0.88) is the lowest among the variables, such as being a Chinese person (M=3.82, SD=0.88), the Chinese economy (M=3.41, SD=0.84), and the Chinese society (M=3.36, SD=0.81).

*Demographic information.* Demographic information, including gender, age, education level, wealth, and whether the viewer had visited the US or not were assessed by commonly accepted measures. The gender was coded by using 1 (male) or 2 (female). Age was assessed by a scale ranging from 1 (below age 18), 2 (18-25), 3 (26-30), 4 (31-40), 5 (41-50), 6 (51-60), to 7 (above 60). The viewer's education level was coded using 1 (primary school), 2 (junior high school), 3 (senior high school), 4 (college or university level with an undergraduate degree), to 5 (university

level with a postgraduate degree). In coding whether the viewer had visited the US, respondents were asked ‘have you been to the US’? The answer was measured by 1 (yes) or 2 (no). Their wealth was measured by the self-assessment on a 10 point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (poor) to 10 (rich). The mean value shows that the respondents are mainly female ( $M=1.7$ ,  $SD=0.46$ ), 26-30 years old ( $M=2.17$ ,  $SD=0.49$ ), with a college or university degree ( $M=4.07$ ,  $SD=0.50$ ), have not visited the US ( $M=1.94$ ,  $SD=0.23$ ), and are a little wealthier than average ( $M=5.39$ ,  $SD=1.91$ ).

#### **4.3.4 Pilot study**

Before conducting the survey on a large population, a pilot study was conducted to improve the questionnaire. The pilot study was crucial for adjusting the survey questions and gathering feedback from participants. The pilot study also helped to refine variables.

First, pilot study helped the researcher to choose the right online survey website. This study selected Sojump.com rather than others as the survey website because it is the largest survey site for research purposes in China. It covers more than 90 percent of Chinese higher education institutes and consulting companies such as Tsinghua University, Beijing University, Chinese University Hong Kong, PWC, and McKinsey. Sojump.com, founded in 2006, has 20 million users and has collected 1,346 million responses since its founding<sup>4</sup>.

Second, the original questionnaire had many more questions than the final one. To avoid survey fatigue and make the survey more efficient, the researcher refined the questions based on feedback and focused on four variables: viewership, gratifications, perceptions of cultural values, and perceptions of realities. The perception of Chinese reality was intended to discover the audiences’ opinion about their reality, which includes the Chinese economy, culture, society, and being a Chinese person. The original set of questions also included a question on the Chinese political environment; however, due to censorship of the Internet, political questions did not pass the screening on the survey website, causing the questionnaire to be suspended. Therefore, the researcher had to delete that question to continue the survey creation process.

### **4.4 Quasi-experiment**

#### **4.4.1 Overview**

A quasi-experiment was adopted in this study to test the direct relationship between viewing

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<sup>4</sup> The information was based on the official websites of Sojump.com (问卷星).

American TV series and Chinese audiences' perceptions of their cultural identity and values. Experiments by their very nature are designed to test the effects of one variable (or a set of variables) on another (or another set of variables); it is the classical method researchers have used to construct causal arguments (Merrigan & Huston, 2009a). Explanation, prediction, and control are the desired goals of experimental communication research. Experiments rely on explanatory, predictive claims that are tested deductively as forms of causal arguments. Establishing causality in experimental research is essentially a deductive process. It begins with generating claims as theoretical explanations for observed patterns of human communication (Smith, 1988). These are constructed in the form of hypotheses that predict that manipulating causal factors will account for observed effects on the dependent variable. An experiment for observing those effects was designed and used to test the hypothesis. The observations verify the explanatory predictions through precise and systematic analysis.

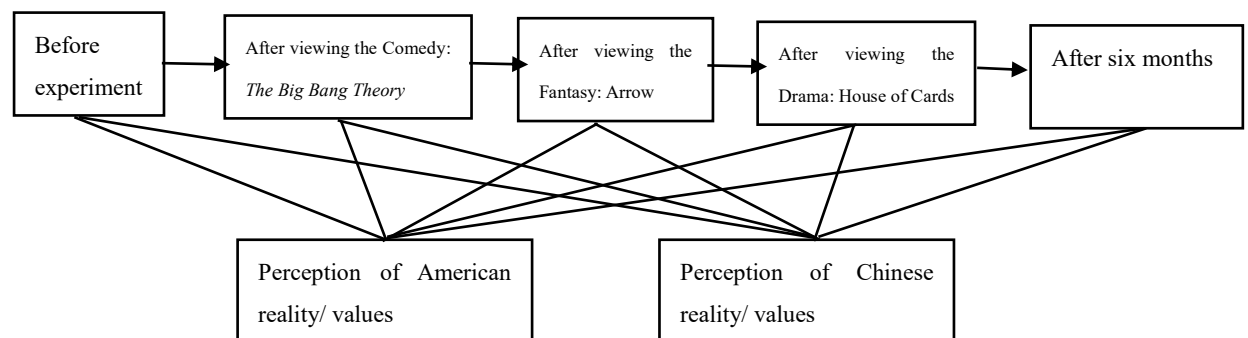
For three reasons a quasi-experimental design was used instead of a true experimental design. First, a true experimental design is impractical for this study. A true experiment would require a physical intervention in which all other potential factors that cause change are controlled and only the possible causal factor would be allowed to vary (Byrne, 2017). In a social science study this degree of control is not possible. Second, a true experimental design is usually conducted in a laboratory, which is unnecessary and impractical for this study. This study can only be carried out effectively in real-life settings enabling the participants to be in their natural state, as this could increase the external validity of the study. Third, a true experiment requires a large number of samples in order to apply statistical controls (Byrne, 2017). The participants in this research have been recruited from five cities in China to ensure geographical diversity. A large number of participants are difficult to recruit and manage due to the limited time and resources available. A quasi-experimental design is advocated, such as in this case, when a true experiment is not feasible due to practical or ethical reasons (Cook & Campbell, 1979).

The quasi-experiment in this study was conducted among non-American TV viewers. This entailed recruiting 33 Chinese participants who do not watch American TV shows to be in a treatment group. Another 32 participants who also did not watch American TV series constituted a control group. The participants in the treatment group were asked to watch one season each of three American TV series. Each was asked to fill out a questionnaire before and after they watched each individual American TV series. This experiment can also assess the link between genres of TV series, which may influence the audiences' perception of reality and cultural values. The process of the quasi-

experiment is shown in Figure 4.4.

Of course, it is important to note that there are some limitations to this method (as with all the methods used in this study). The cultivation of television programs conducted on values could be a long-term process; the three seasons of American TV series may only have a short-term and limited effect. To partially address this concern, a follow-up research was conducted six months after the experiment.

**Figure 4.4 Quasi-experiment process in this study**



The following is the hypothesis tested by the quasi-experiment:

Viewing American TV series strengthen Chinese audiences' perceptions of American cultural values and reality, weaken their perceptions of Chinese cultural values, and weaken their satisfaction of Chinese reality.

The test of this hypothesis explores the potential change in audiences' perceptions of cultural values and realities during experiment. The mixed model analysis of variance (ANOVA) with one fixed factor was adopted to compare the difference in perceptions between each procedure of the treatment to define the changes within the process. Besides, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted to find the significant changes of perceptions in each treatment process through comparisons with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment.

#### 4.4.2 Sampling

There is no general technique for sampling for experimental research that is accepted by all scholars. For instance, there is no universal law to calculate how many participants are needed for a specific experimental study. This quasi-experiment aims to test the relationship between viewing American TV series and changes in cultural values among the viewers who have never seen American TV

series before. This means there are no clear frameworks for the entire population and random sampling seemed impossible to conduct. However, the participants should fit into the demographic profiles typical of Chinese audiences of American TV series. This could be estimated from the demographic information of the online survey in this study, statistical reports of Chinese Internet users, and previous studies of Chinese audiences of American TV series. This meant the participants should have been between 19-50 years old with a minimal high school education level.

Participants were recruited from the Internet and informed about the study specifically that the research is about the impact of American television in China. The target audience was Chinese people who had never seen American series. To ensure the geographical diversity of the participants, the study chose Beijing (Northern China), Hangzhou (Eastern China), Wuhan (Central China), Guangzhou (Southern China), and Chengdu (Western China) as recruiting cities. These cities are the political and economic centres in their region, and netizens in these regions account for 91.7 percent of Chinese netizens (China Internet Network Information Centre, 2014a), which includes the majority of the Chinese audiences of American TV series.

As mentioned, the research involved 65 participants. The participants were randomly assigned to two groups: 33 people in the treatment group and 32 people in the control group. The participants were mixed in gender, educational level, age, income, and location, in order to avoid group bias. The treatment group consisted of seven participants from Beijing, six participants from Hangzhou, seven participants from Wuhan, seven participants from Guangzhou, and six participants from Chengdu. The control group consisted of six participants from Beijing, seven participants from Hangzhou, six participants from Wuhan, seven participants from Guangzhou, and six participants from Chengdu. The demographic information of the participants is shown in Appendix H. The participants in the treatment group were asked to view three seasons of American TV series (*The Big Bang Theory*, *Arrow*, *House of Cards*).

#### **4.4.3 Procedures, treatment, and validity**

There are two types of threats to validity: internal threats and external threats. Internal threats are experimental procedures, treatments, or experiences of the participants that threaten the researcher's ability to draw correct inferences from the data about the population in an experiment (Creswell, 2014). To ensure the validity of this experiment, a pilot study was conducted to test the experimental procedures and make sure that the participants' backgrounds fit into the study.

With experimental design, the researcher studies a single group and provides an intervention during the experiment and this design does have a control group to compare with the treatment group (Creswell 2014). This design includes a pre-test measure followed by a treatment and a post-test for a single group. The treatment group in this study was asked to view three seasons of American TV series and fill in a questionnaire before and after viewing each series. A self-evaluation questionnaire was adopted to gather information in the experiment. Causal processes can be documented in a questionnaire by building in experiments (Visser et al., 2000). Survey is used in media research experiments to reveal the cognitive processing of content (Robinson & Mendelson, 2012).

The treatment process was fixed as viewing the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory* (Season one, 17 episodes, with a total of 348 minutes), the fantasy series *Arrow* (Season one, 23 episodes, with a total of 963 minutes), and the drama series *House of Cards* (Season one, 13 episodes, with a total of 664 minutes) to control the influence of the treatment order. The control group did not watch any American television series during this time, but completed a questionnaire at the beginning and end of the experiment respectively. Moreover, as part of the quasi-experiment, an invitation for a follow-up research with the same questionnaire was sent to all the participants after six months; 63 people gave feedback.

The reason these three shows were chosen is because, as mentioned earlier, they are on the list of the most popular American TV series in 2013-2014 (see Appendix A). Their availability online has enabled the participants to access them easily. Therefore, the participants was sent a link to stream these American TV series.

#### **4.4.4 Variables and measures**

The variables have to be specified so that it is clear which groups are receiving the experimental treatment and what outcomes are being measured (Creswell, 2014). The independent variable must be the treatment variable. The dependent variable is the response or the criterion variable presumed to be caused by, or influenced by, the independent treatment conditions and any other independent variables. The independent variables in this study are the Chinese audiences' exposure to three seasons of specific American TV series. The dependent variables are the Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural values and realities. To avoid a demographic bias, both the treatment group and the control group contain a mix of ages, education levels, income and locations.

The reason for labelling age, education, income and location as controlled variables is that they could be factors that influence the Chinese audience to accept American culture. Controlling for variables could reveal the connections between these demographic elements and the acceptance of American values. The independent variables, as mentioned, were viewing three seasons of American television series with a total running time of more than 1,900 minutes. This study concentrates on the short-term changes after participants watch the American TV series to evaluate if there has been an influence on their values and cultural identity. To keep the measures in this study consistent and reliable, the researcher used the same measures regarding the perceptions of cultural values and realities as that used in the online survey.

*Perceptions of American reality.* In assessing the perceptions of American reality, respondents were asked: ‘how accurately do you think American TV series reflect US society and culture?’ using a 10-point scale, from 1 (not at all accurate) to 10 (extremely accurate).

*Cultural values.* The measurement of seven Chinese values (family orientation, relationship by status, non-competitiveness, prudence, thrift, respect for tradition, and sexual conservatism) was adapted from the Chinese Culture Connection (1987)’s Chinese Value Survey (CVS) by asking each participant about each values’ importance, using statements and descriptions on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree/not at all like me), 2 (disagree/not like me), 3 (neutral/some-what like me), 4 (agree/like me), to 5 (strongly agree/very much like me). The Chinese value was assessed with statements such as, ‘It is important to do something for the good of the family’; ‘It is important to obey the elderly and supervisors’; ‘Try to avoid competing with others as much as possible’; ‘Living in secure surroundings is important, and avoid anything that might be dangerous’; ‘Saving money is important, and avoid buying expensive things if it is unnecessary, even when you desire it a lot’; ‘tradition is important and we have to follow the customs and rules handed down by one’s family’; ‘premarital sex is bad’. The measurement of seven American values (individual orientation, equality, competition, adventurousness, leisure, modernity, and sexual liberation) was adapted from Hofstede (2001)’s research comparing cultural values by assessing the respondents’ opinion about each item on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree/not at all like me), 2 (disagree/not like me), 3 (neutral/some-what like me), 4 (agree/like me), to 5 (strongly agree/very much like me). The American values were assessed with statements such as: ‘It is important to do things in one’s own way’; ‘It is important to point out someone’s mistakes no matter whether they are in a leadership or a higher social position, as people are equal’; ‘Competitions



make life better'; 'Adventurousness and taking risks are important and make life exciting'; 'It is important to have a good time and to 'spoil' oneself'; 'The modern lifestyle is good'; 'Marriage between gay people is OK'.

*Perceptions of Chinese reality.* In assessing perceptions of Chinese reality, respondents were asked to assess statements like: 'I am satisfied with the Chinese economy'; 'I am satisfied with the Chinese social environment'; 'I am satisfied with the Chinese cultural environment'; 'I am satisfied and proud of being a Chinese' on a 10-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (very satisfied).

The instrument in this study is a questionnaire, which the participants completed before and after they viewed each specified American TV series. In order to compare the data from the experiment with the data from the online survey, the questionnaire used here was adopted from online survey questionnaire (see Appendix E). In this case, the Chinese audiences' perceptions of American and Chinese reality and cultural values were tested through the questionnaire. This is an important process to show whether there is a connection between Chinese audiences viewing American TV series and changes in the audiences' cultural identity and values.

#### **4.4.5 Pilot study**

Before conducting the quasi-experiment on all participants, a pilot study was conducted to improve the treatment process. The pilot study was helpful for smoothing and finalizing the treatment process. To recreate the natural state of online viewing, the experiment allowed the audiences to stream the three seasons of American TV series based on the audience members' schedule. However, the order of viewing these three TV series was fixed. Participants in the treatment group were required to complete a questionnaire before the treatment, after viewing the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, after viewing the fantasy series *Arrow*, and after viewing the drama *House of Cards*, respectively. The control group participants only completed a questionnaire before and after the quasi-experiment. In addition, participants in both the treatment and control groups had to complete the follow-up research by filling in a same questionnaire six months after the quasi-experiment concluded.

### **4.5 In-depth interview**

#### **4.5.1 Overview**

This study also used an in-depth interview as a research method to identify potential changes in the Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural values and identity during the quasi-experiment. In-depth

interviews are commonly used to seek deeper information and understanding than is used in surveys, and relates to personal matters such as an individual's experiences, values, cultural knowledge, or perspective (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012). The in-depth interview method has been found useful in gaining an understanding of cultural, sociological, and psychological behavior (Neuman, 2011; Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2014). Moreover, an in-depth interview helps to portray ongoing social processes and capture changes through retrospective interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). The use of an in-depth interview enabled the researcher to further understand the impact of viewing American TV series on the participants' perceptions of cultural realities and values during the treatment of quasi-experiment.

The following is the research question answered by the in-depth interview:

What are the changes in participants' understanding of cultural values and identity during treatment?

This research question focused on the details of the potential changes. To answer this question, an in-depth interview was adopted to let the participants in the treatment group talk about their understanding of cultural values and identity after the experiment. This was used to define how the potential changes in perceptions happens during a treatment and to explore the model of those changes.

#### **4.5.2 Sample, procedures, and data gathering**

During the treatment process of the quasi-experiment, the American TV series provided Chinese participants with the opportunity to perceive different cultural values. The in-depth interviews after the treatment have enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the interactions or conflicts between the values the Chinese participants have and the values that they perceived from viewing American TV series. This further explains the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences' values. The participants in the treatment group were invited to take an in-depth interview after the experiment. Ten participants accepted the invitation and participated in the in-depth interview (Appendix I).

In terms of recruiting participants, numerous studies on in-depth interviews suggest that five to fifty interviewees is an adequate sample size (Creswell, 2014; Morse, 2000). Other studies agree that six to fifteen interviewees is the smallest acceptable sample size (Guest et al., 2006). In this case, the

sample size of 10 in in-depth interviews should be representative enough to reflect the impact of American TV series during the treatment.

The in-depth interview used a structured questions format (Appendix J) to guide the interview process. The question structure includes four parts: 1) whether the participants will continue watching American TV series after the experiment and the reason for this choice; 2) participants' understanding of the contrast between the American values they perceived from American TV series and Chinese values in their real life; 3) participants' understanding of American reality after treatment, and 4) the participants' understandings of Chinese reality after the treatment.

All the interviews were conducted in the local city public libraries or schools, or by Wechat video calling; each interview lasted for 20-40 minutes. Each interview was recorded using a digital voice recorder with the approval of the interviewees. Then, the interviews were transcribed by the researcher and double-checked by the interviewees to ensure accuracy before analysis. To keep their information confidential, this study only uses modified names when presenting the results.

#### **4.5.2 Pilot study**

Before conducting the in-depth interviews, a pilot study was conducted to improve the clarity of interview structure and questions. The pilot study was helpful and allowed the researcher to refine the interview questions. The interview questions were intended to inspire participants to talk about the cultural values that were shown in the American TV series. Therefore, the interview questions began with a statement regarding scenes from the series providing an orientation to the series' cultural values. This encouraged a discussion allowing the participants to review any changes that occurred in their perceptions of cultural values during the experiment and explained the participants' understanding of those changes. The interview questions also examined the extent of the participants' engagement with the content.

#### **4.6 Data analysis**

This study used SPSS to analyse the data collected for statistical analysis. For the research questions related to content analysis, the researcher used both descriptive analysis and independent samples t-test to assess the research hypotheses. For the research questions related to the survey, the researcher used descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, and hierarchical multiple regression analysis to assess the research hypotheses. For the research questions related to the experiment, the researcher used descriptive statistics, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor, and

a repeated measures analysis using mixed models to assess the research hypotheses.

The in-depth interview data was analysed using Rubin and Rubin (2011)'s analysis steps. First, every transcript was read carefully and systematically to refine and integrate the important concepts, themes, and events that were presented. Second, the researcher developed a brief label to identify the concepts, themes and events. Third, the researcher sorted the codes into appropriate categories and looked for patterns and connections by comparing them. Fourth, the researcher examined the ways that themes fit together and built toward the construction of a theory. Fifth, the researcher presented and discussed the results. In this study, the five steps were used to process the in-depth interview data in order to answer the research questions that related to the interviews.

## **4.7 Conclusion**

In conducting this research, many iterative improvements were made to help the researcher to achieve the research goals in an objective and efficient way, and reduce the chances of error. This chapter focused on explaining the design and justification of the four research methods used, namely content analysis, online survey, quasi-experiment, and in-depth interviews. The design of data collection and the subsequent processing of the data are discussed in this chapter. While some weaknesses exist with each research method, these are limited to some degree by the use of triangulation amongst the four methods to support claims regarding the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences' cultural values and identity.

## **Chapter 5 Different values in different shows? Identifying values from Chinese audiences' comments on Chinese TV series and American TV series**

*"House of Cards not only has a fantastic story, but also portrayed the exquisite relationship between the characters which make the audiences cling to. The intricate relationship between the main characters, the couple Mr. and Mrs. Underwood, triggered fierce discussion in Chinese social media like Weibo and WeChat. In general, cultural values can be exported through these individual characters and this is always the strength of American TV series. For exportation of values, this kind of subliminal influence is much more effective than purely education and propaganda."*(Ma, 2014b)

-- Ma Wei, *People's Daily*, 8 April 2014, 14<sup>th</sup> Section

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents and discusses the descriptive statistical findings in relation to research questions 1 to 4. Research questions 1 and 2 examines the attitudes of Chinese audiences toward their country and people, and America and the American people. Research questions 3 and 4 explore whether differences exist concerning values in the Chinese audiences who watch American TV series and the Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series.

### **5.2 Findings**

#### **5.2.1 Comparison of attitudes toward the subject of comments from Chinese and American TV series**

*Hypothesis 1.1: Chinese audiences who watch American TV series have a positive attitude toward America/American people.*

Value judgments cannot be separated from their subjects. To explore Chinese audiences' attitudes toward values, the subject of comments should be analyzed first, which is testing the hypothesis 1.1.

A Chi-square test of independence was performed and a significant interaction was found between TV programs and subject of comments and,  $X^2(20, N = 1080) = 1065.10, p < .001$ . Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series are more focused on comments about China ( $n=43$ ) and Chinese people ( $n=495$ ), outnumbering the comments about America ( $n=0$ ) and American people ( $n=2$ ). This may be due to the mono-cultural setting in Chinese TV series. There are no references to the US and American people that Chinese audiences can compare with what they see on local Chinese TV series. However, Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are more focused on America ( $n=93$ ) and American people ( $n=460$ ) than on China ( $n=26$ ) and Chinese people ( $n=3$ ) in their comments. The reason is that Chinese audiences post comments about China while watching American series, which is the cross-cultural setting, giving Chinese audiences a reference (America) to compare with the country they reside (China). Similarly, American TV series did not offer enough Chinese characters in their plots for audiences to focus on, so there were only three comments about Chinese people in the sample.

**Table 5.1 Number of comments by Chinese audiences, by subject**

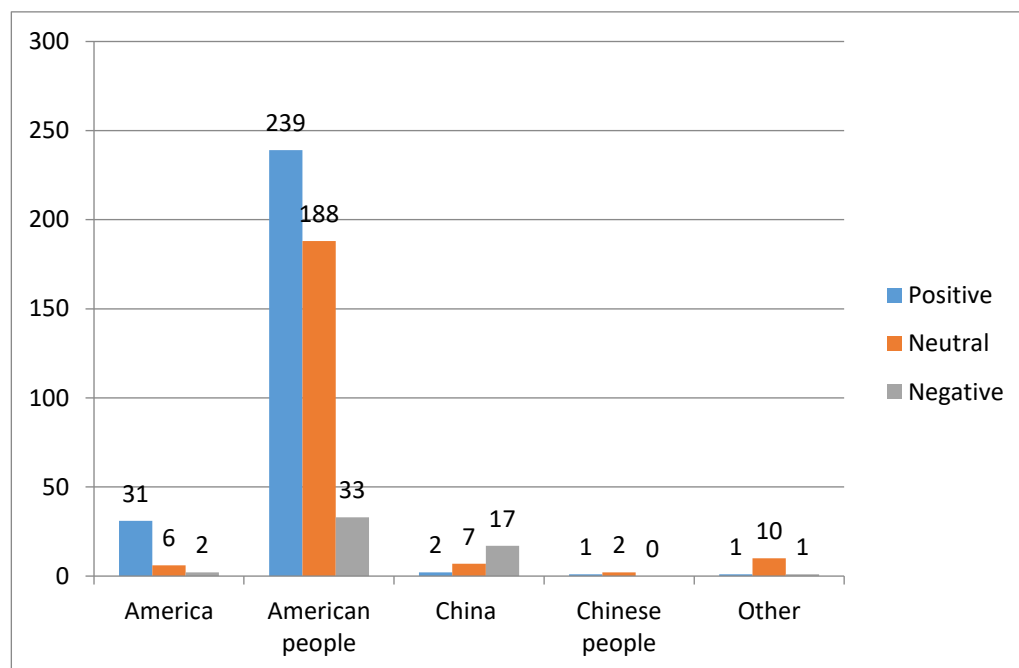
	<u>Number of references</u>				
	America	Americans	China	Chinese	Others
<b>Empress in the Palace</b>	0 0%	1 50%	10 23%	169 34%	0 0%
<b>Lurk</b>	0 0%	1 50%	24 56%	155 31%	0 0%
<b>To Elderly with Love</b>	0 0%	0 0%	9 21%	171 35%	0 0%
<b>Total (Chinese series):</b>	<b>0</b> <b>0%</b>	<b>2</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>43</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>495</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>0</b> <b>0%</b>
<b>The Big Bang Theory</b>	14 36%	149 32%	15 58%	1 33%	1 8%
<b>House of Cards</b>	23 59%	141 31%	10 38%	1 33%	5 42%
<b>Arrow</b>	2 5%	170 37%	1 4%	1 33%	6 50%
<b>Total (American series):</b>	<b>39</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>460</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>26</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>3</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>12</b> <b>100%</b>

However, although there is a large gap in the volume of comments, there were notable differences in attitude toward the subjects of the comments. Chinese audiences who watch American TV series tend to have a positive attitude toward America (80% positive, 15% neutral, 5% negative). In contrast, they have a negative attitude toward China (8% positive, 27% neutral, 65% negative). Also, Chinese audiences have a positive attitude toward American people (52% positive, 41% neutral, 7% negative), but a relatively neutral attitude toward Chinese people (33% positive, 67% neutral, 0% negative). These findings support hypothesis 1.1.

**Table 5.2 Chinese audiences' attitudes toward the subject of their comments on American TV series**

Subject of Comments		Attitude towards subject of comment			Total
		Positive	Neutral	Negative	
<b>American TV series</b>	America	31 80%	6 15%	2 5%	39 100%
	American people	239 52%	188 41%	33 7%	460 100%
	China	2 8%	7 27%	17 65%	26 100%
	Chinese people	1 33%	2 67%	0 0%	3 100%
	Other	1 8%	10 84%	1 8%	12 100%

**Figure 5.1 The attitudes of Chinese audience who watch American TV series toward the subject of their comments**



**Hypothesis 1.2:** Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series have a positive attitude toward China/Chinese people.

The Chinese audiences who watch local television rarely comment on America or American people because there are no American references in Chinese TV series. The number of positive comments

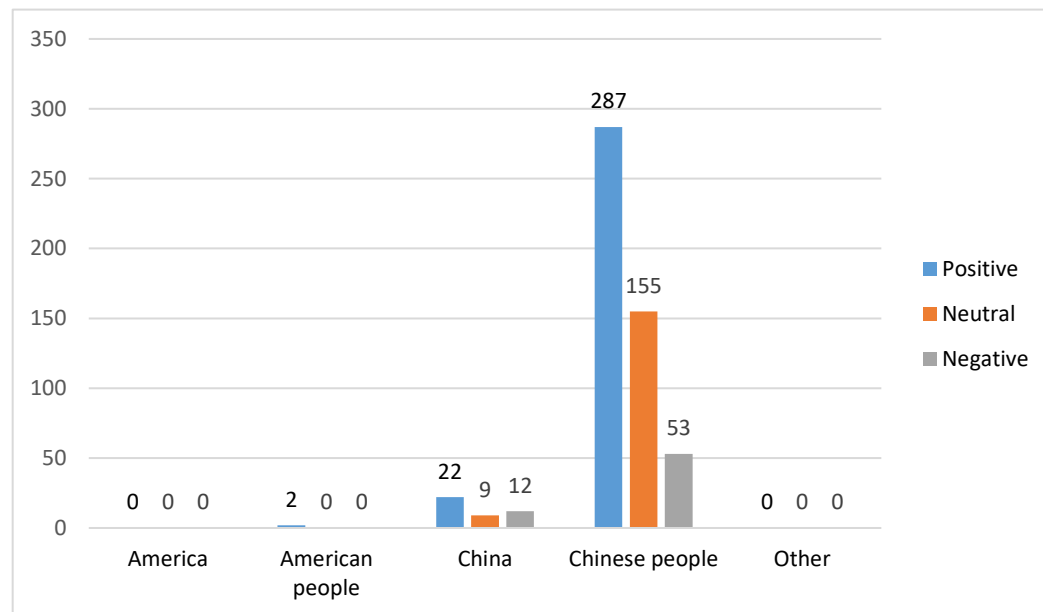
made by Chinese audiences toward China are much greater than the number of negative comments (51% positive, 21% neutral, 28% negative). However, there are no comments about America in the sample. Chinese audiences of Chinese TV series have a positive attitude toward Chinese people (58% positive, 31% neutral, 11% negative). Also, the Chinese audiences of local TV series have a positive attitude toward American people (100% positive, 0% neutral, 0% negative). The findings support hypothesis 1.2.

**Table 5.3 Chinese audiences' attitudes towards the subject of their comments on Chinese TV series**

Target of Comments		Attitude towards target of comment			Total
		Positive	Neutral	Negative	
<b>Chinese series</b>	America	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
	American people	2 100%	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%
	China	22 51%	9 21%	12 28%	43 100%
	Chinese people	287 58%	155 31%	53 11%	495 100%
	Other	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%



**Figure 5.2 The attitudes of Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series toward the subject of their comments**



### 5.2.2 The difference between interpreting American TV series and Chinese TV series regarding cultural values in the Chinese audiences' comments

*Hypothesis 1.3:* Chinese audiences are more likely to identify American values through watching American TV series than by watching Chinese TV series, while Chinese audiences are more likely to identify Chinese values through watching Chinese TV series than watching American TV series.

*Hypothesis 1.4:* Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are more likely to be positive toward American values than those who watch Chinese TV series, while Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series are more likely to be positive toward Chinese values than those who watch American TV series.

To test hypotheses 1.3 and 1.4, we need to understand the data from two perspectives. First, the comments were tracked and then all the values mentioned on the comments were coded, in order to calculate the total numbers of each value. Comparing the total numbers helps to understand that differences between Chinese TV series and American TV series are related to reflection of cultural values. Second, it was necessary to code the overall values reflected in each comment and the Chinese audiences' attitudes toward them. Both the number of overall values and the attitudes

toward them were compared in order to explore the differences in value judgements between Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series and Chinese audiences who watch American TV series. The identification of overall values and the Chinese audiences' attitudes toward them reflected the priorities of cultural values among Chinese audiences.

#### 5.2.2.1 Testing the judgment of values in comments by sentence

The following findings were obtained from coding the sentences that contain value statements in each comment and then calculating the total number of statements regarding each value. The aim was to compare the difference between the numbers of values that were identified in the comments on Chinese TV series with those identified in the comments on American TV series. The 14 values are paired into seven groups: family orientation versus individual orientation, thrift versus leisure, respect for tradition versus modernity, non-competitiveness versus competition, prudence versus adventurousness, relationship by status versus equality, and sexual conservatism versus sexual liberation. Comparing the number of these seven pairs of values that are reflected in the comments could explain the value priorities of Chinese audiences who watch American TV series or who watch Chinese TV series. After performing the independent samples t-test on each pair of values, the results show significant differences in the mean values for Chinese TV series and American TV series. The mean value closest to 1 means the comments are more in American value orientation (individualism, leisure, modernity, competition, adventurousness, equality, and sexual liberation). The mean value closest to 3 means the comments are more in Chinese value orientation (family orientation, thrift, respect for tradition, non-competitiveness, prudence, relationship by status, sexual conservatism). The results in Table 5.4 suggest that Chinese audiences identify different values from Chinese TV series and American TV series. Specifically, Chinese audiences who comment on American TV series are more likely to identify American values than Chinese audiences who comment on Chinese TV series.

**Table 5.4 T-test results comparing Chinese TV series and American TV series on values**

	Chinese TV series		American TV series		T-Test
Dependent variable	M	SD	M	SD	t
Family orientation vs. individualism	2.482	.877	1.292	.708	20.291 <sup>**</sup>
Thrift vs. leisure	2.818	.579	1.041	.284	24.709 <sup>**</sup>

<b>Respect for tradition vs. modernity</b>	2.906	.426	1.553	.900	12.302 <sup>***</sup>
<b>Non-competitiveness vs. competition</b>	2.482	.879	1.014	.166	20.837 <sup>***</sup>
<b>Prudence vs. adventurousness</b>	2.625	.783	1.083	.400	25.651 <sup>***</sup>
<b>Relationship by status vs. equality</b>	2.845	.537	1.129	.493	26.441 <sup>***</sup>
<b>Sexual conservatism vs. sexual liberation</b>	2.864	.510	1.000	.000	24.242 <sup>***</sup>

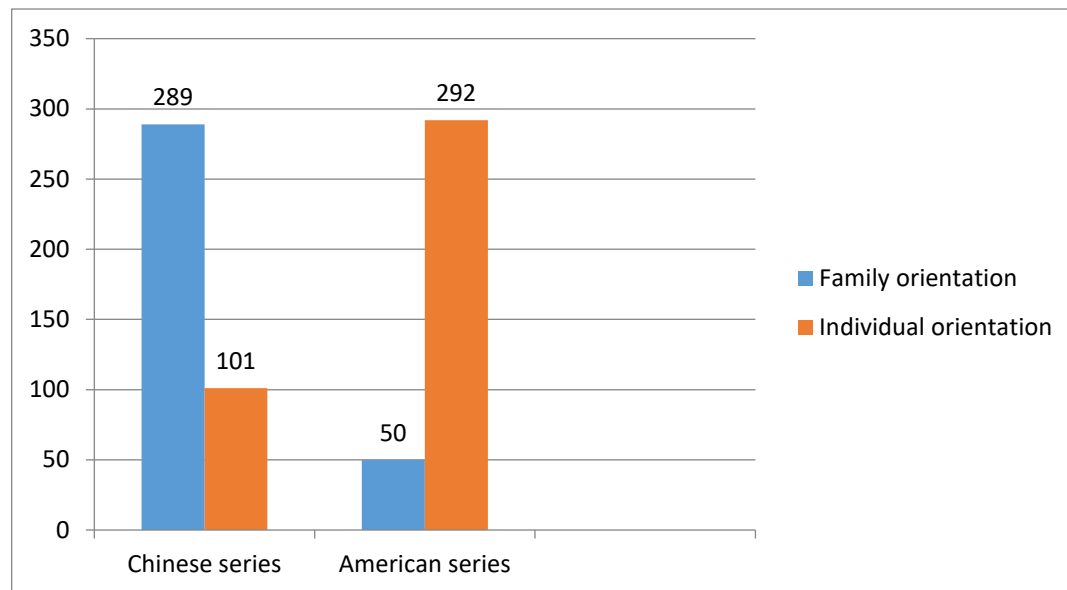
Note: value '1=American value, 2=neutral, 3=Chinese value',  $p^{***} < .001$

### 1. Family orientation versus individual orientation

The difference is reflected in the number of values identified from these two kinds of TV series. Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series tend to identify family orientation (289 family oriented comments, 101 individualism oriented comments), while Chinese audiences who watch American TV series tend to identify individual orientation (292 individual oriented comments, 50 family oriented comments). In the comments about Chinese TV series, audiences tend to identify 'family orientation' ( $M=2.482$ ,  $SD=.877$ ). But, audiences tend to identify 'individual orientation' in the comments about American series, with ( $M=1.292$ ,  $SD=.708$ ).

Chinese audiences who comment on American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment on Chinese TV series were associated with a statistically significant difference in identifying family orientation and individual orientation, according to the independent samples t-test performed. The distributions of comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series ( $skew=.148$ ,  $kurtosis=-1.983$ ) were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e.,  $skew < |2.0|$  and  $kurtosis < |9.0|$  (Schmider et al., 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test. The independent samples t-test is associated with a statistically significant effect in family orientation and individual orientation  $t(725.062) = 20.291$ ,  $p=.000$ . Thus, Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series were associated with a statistically significant difference in identifying family orientation and individual orientation. Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series tend to identifying individual orientation more than people who comment about Chinese TV series.

**Figure 5.3 The ‘family orientation’ and ‘individual orientation’ in the comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**



**Table 5.5 The mean value associated with ‘individual orientation’ and ‘family orientation’ in comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**

	N	Mean	SD
Chinese TV series	390	2.482	.877
American TV series	342	1.292	.708

‘1= individual orientation, 2=neutral, 3=family orientation’

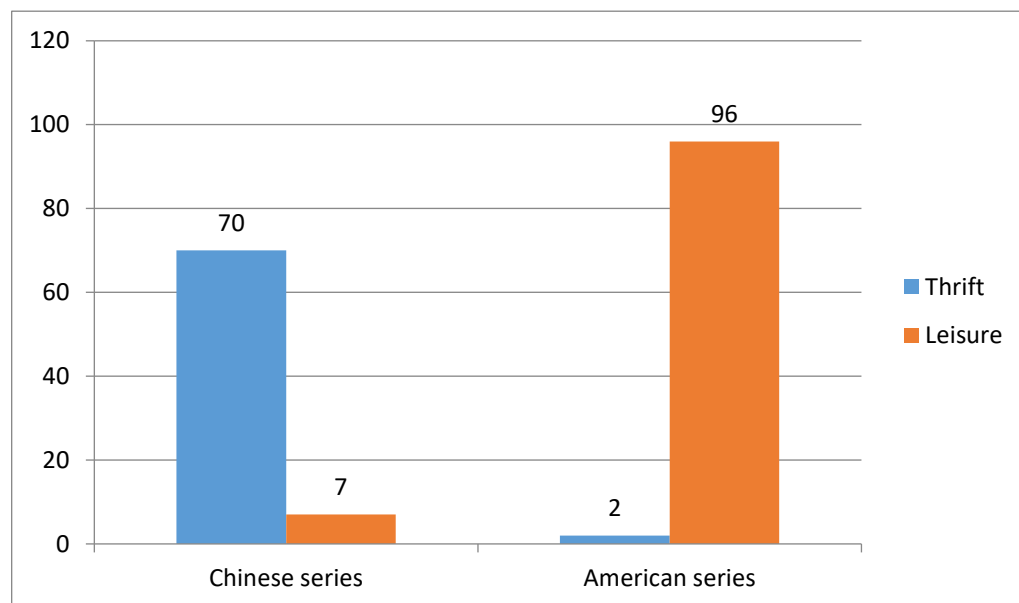
## 2. Thrift versus leisure

The difference is reflected in the number of values identified from these two kinds of TV series. Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series tend to identify thrift (70 comments about thrift, 7 comments about leisure), while Chinese audiences who watch American TV series tend to identify leisure (96 comments about leisure, 2 comments about thrift). In the comments about Chinese TV series, Chinese audiences tend to identify ‘thrift’ ( $M=2.818$ ,  $SD=.579$ ). But, Chinese audiences tend to identify ‘leisure’ ( $M=1.041$ ,  $SD=.284$ ) in the comments about American TV series.

Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series were associated with a statistically significant difference in identifying thrift and leisure, according to the independent samples t-test performed. The distributions of comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series (skew= .363; kurtosis=-2.004) were

sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e., skew  $< |2.0|$  and kurtosis  $< |9.0|$  (Schmider et al., 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test. The independent samples t-test was associated with a statistically significant effect in leisure and thrift  $t(104.595) = 24.709, p = .000$ . Thus, the Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series and the Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series were associated with a statistically significant difference in identify thrift and leisure. Chinese audiences who comment about American series tend to identify leisure more than Chinese audience who comment about Chinese series.

**Figure 5.4 The 'thrft' and 'leisure' in the comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**



**Table 5.6 The mean value associated with 'thrft' and 'leisure' in comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**

	N	Mean	SD
Chinese series	77	2.818	.579
American series	98	1.041	.284

'1= leisure, 2=neutral, 3=thrft'

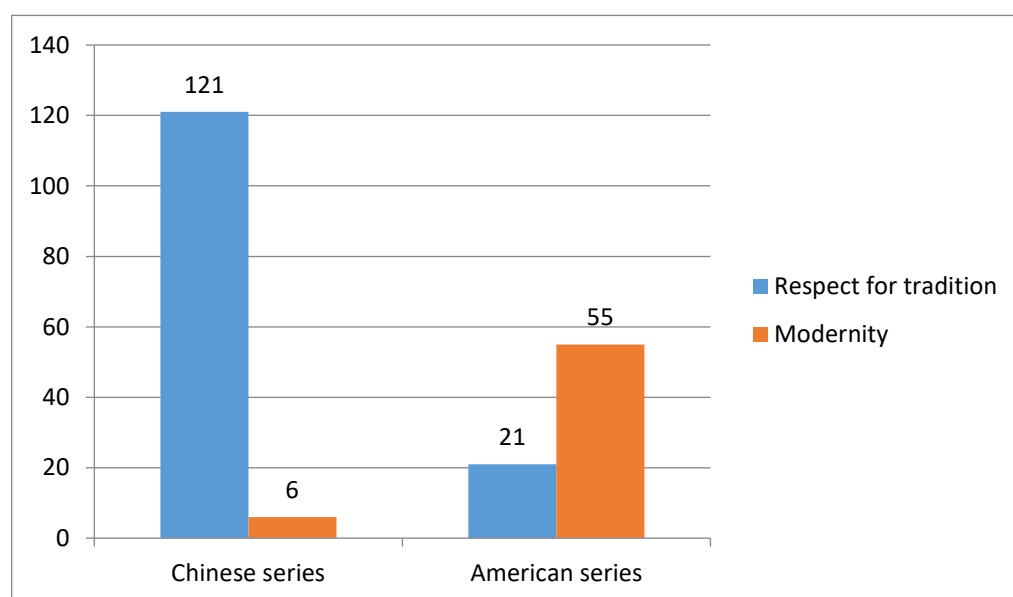
### 3. Respect for tradition versus modernity

The difference is reflected in the number of values identifying from these two kinds of TV series. Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series tend to identify respect for tradition (121 comments about respect for tradition, 6 comments about modernity), while Chinese audiences who

watch American TV series tend to identify modernity (55 comments about modernity, 21 comments about respect for tradition). In the comments about Chinese TV series, audiences tend to identify ‘respect for tradition’ (M=2.906, SD= .426). But, audiences tend to identify ‘modernity’ (M=1.553, SD= .900) in the comments about American TV series.

Chinese audiences who comment on American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment on Chinese TV series associated with a statistically significant difference in identifying respect for tradition and modernity, according to the independent samples t-test performed. The distributions of comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series (skew=-.877; kurtosis=-1.244) were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e., skew < | 2.0 | and kurtosis < | 9.0 | (Schmider et al., 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene’s F test. The independent samples t-test is associated with a statistically significant effect in leisure and thrift  $t(95.425) = 12.302, p = .000$ . Thus, Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series were associated with a statistically significant difference in identify respect for tradition and modernity. Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series tend to identify modernity more than people who comment on Chinese TV series.

**Figure 5.5 The ‘respect for tradition’ and ‘modernity’ in the comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**



**Table 5.7 The mean value associated with ‘respect for tradition’ and ‘modernity’ in comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Chinese TV series</b>	127	2.906	.426
<b>American TV series</b>	76	1.553	.900

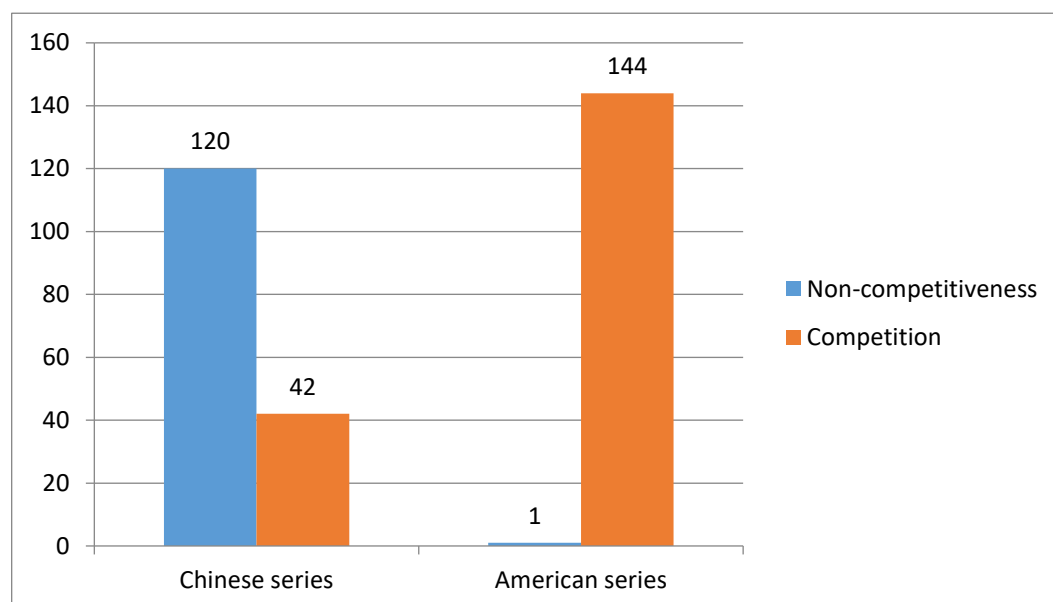
‘1= modernity, 2=neutral, 3=respect for tradition’

#### **4. Non-competitiveness versus competition**

The difference is reflected in the number of values identifying from these two kinds of TV series. Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series tend to identify non-competitiveness (120 comments about non-competitiveness, 42 comments about competition), while Chinese audiences who watch American series tend to identify competition (144 comments about competition, 1 comment about non-competitiveness). In the comments about Chinese TV series, audiences tend to identify ‘non-competitiveness’ ( $M=2.482$ ,  $SD=.879$ ). But, audiences tend to identify ‘competition’ ( $M=1.014$ ,  $SD=.166$ ) in the comments about American series.

Chinese audiences who comment on American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment on Chinese TV series are associated with a statistically significant difference in identifying non-competitiveness and competition, according to the independent samples t-test performed. The distributions of comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series (skew=.435, kurtosis=-1.822) were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e., skew  $< |2.0|$  and kurtosis  $< |9.0|$  (Schmider et al., 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene’s F test. The independent samples t-test is associated with a statistically significant effect in leisure and thrift  $t(173.786)=20.837$ ,  $p=.000$ . Thus, Chinese audiences who comment about American series and Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series are associated with a statistically significant difference in identifying non-competitiveness and competition. Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series tend to identify competition more than people who comment about Chinese TV series.

**Figure 5.6 The ‘non-competitiveness’ and ‘competition’ in the comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**



**Table 5.8 The mean value associated with ‘non-competitiveness’ and ‘competition’ in comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**

	N	Mean	SD
Chinese TV series	162	2.482	.879
American TV series	145	1.014	.166

‘1= competition, 2=neutral, 3=non-competitiveness’

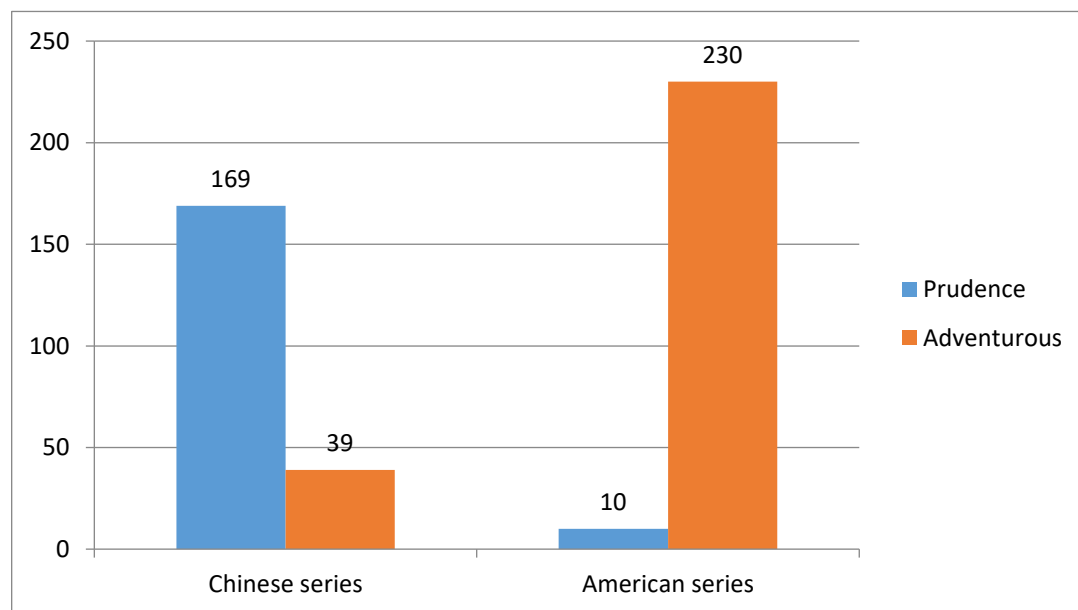
## 5. Prudence versus adventurousness

The difference is reflected in the number of values identified from these two kinds of TV series. Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series tend to identify prudence (169 comments about prudence, 39 comments about adventurousness), while Chinese audiences who watch American TV series tend to identify adventurousness (230 comments about adventurousness, 10 comments about prudence). In the comments about Chinese TV series, audiences tend to identify ‘prudence’ ( $M=2.625$ ,  $SD=.783$ ). But, audiences tend to identify ‘adventurousness’ ( $M=1.083$ ,  $SD=.400$ ) in the comments about American series.



Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese series are associated with a statistically significant difference in identifying prudence and adventurousness, according to the independent samples t-test performed. The distributions of comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series (skew=.412, kurtosis=-1.839) were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e., skew < | 2.0 | and kurtosis < | 9.0 | (Schmider et al., 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test. The independent samples t-test is associated with a statistically significant effect in prudence and adventurousness  $t(298.335) = 25.651, p = .000$ . Thus, Chinese audiences who comment on American series and Chinese audiences who comment on Chinese TV series were associated with a statistically significant difference in identify prudence and adventurousness. Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series are tend to identify adventurousness more than people who comment about Chinese TV series.

**Figure 5.7 The 'prudence' and 'adventurousness' in the comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**



**Table 5.9 The mean value associated with 'prudence' and 'adventurousness' in comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**

	N	Mean	SD
Chinese TV series	208	2.625	.783
American TV series	240	1.083	.400

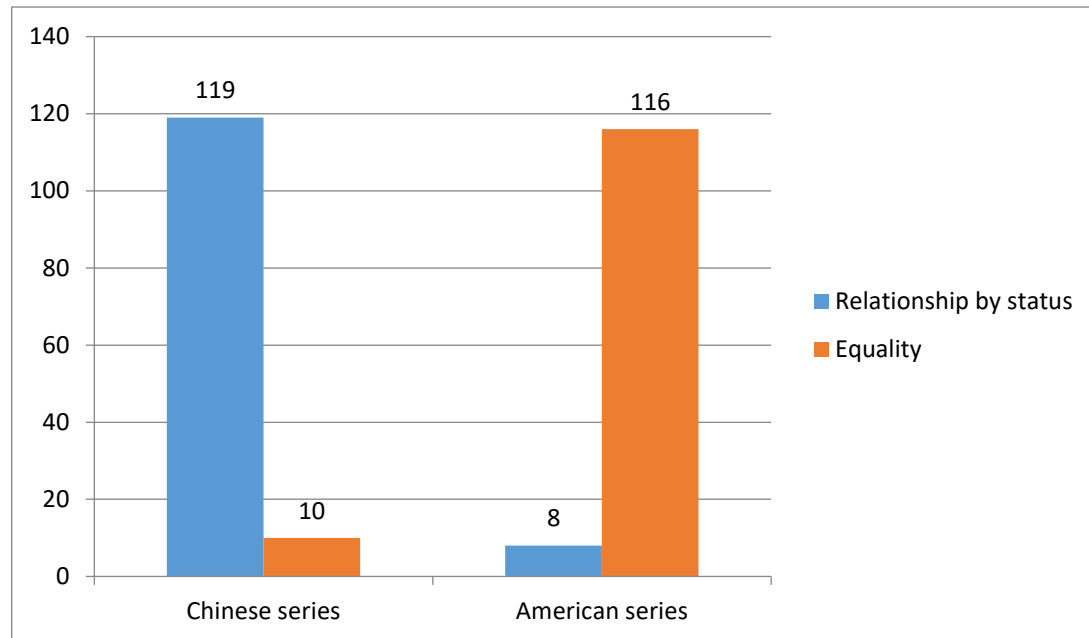
'1= adventurous, 2=neutral, 3=prudence'

## **6. Relationship by status versus equality**

The difference is reflected in the number of values identifying from these two kinds of TV series. Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series tend to identify relationship by status (119 comments about relationship by status, 10 comments about equality), while Chinese audiences who watch American series tend to identify equality (116 comments about equality, 8 comments about relationship by status). In the comments about Chinese TV series, audiences tend to identify 'relationship by status' ( $M=2.845$ ,  $SD=.537$ ). But, audiences tend to identify 'equality' ( $M=1.129$ ,  $SD=.493$ ) in the comments about American TV series.

Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series were associated with a statistically significant difference in identifying relationship by status and equality, according to the independent samples t-test performed. The distributions of comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series ( $skew=-.008$ ,  $kurtosis=-2.016$ ) were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e.,  $skew < | 2.0 |$  and  $kurtosis < | 9.0 |$  (Schmider et al., 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test. The independent samples t-test is associated with a statistically significant effect in relationship by status and equality  $t(251)=26.441$ ,  $p=.000$ . Thus, Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series are associated with a statistically significant difference in perceive relationship by status and equality. Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series tend to identify equality more than Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series.

**Figure 5.8 The ‘relationship by status’ and ‘equality’ in the comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**



**Table 5.10 The mean value associated with ‘relationship by status’ and ‘equality’ in comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**

	N	Mean	SD
Chinese TV series	129	2.845	.537
American TV series	124	1.129	.493

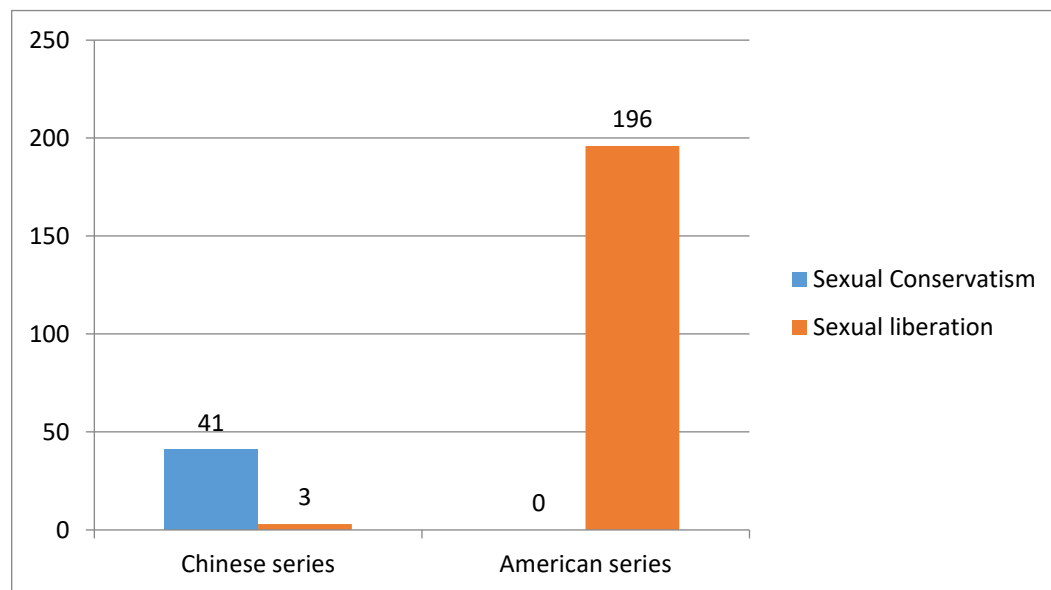
‘1= equality, 2=neutral, 3=relationship by status’

## 7. Sexual conservatism versus sexual liberation

The difference is reflected in the number of values identifying from these two kinds of TV series. Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series tend to identify sexual conservatism (41 comments about sexual conservatism, 3 comments about sexual liberation), while Chinese audiences who watch American TV series tend to identify sexual liberation (196 comments about sexual liberation, 0 comments about sexual conservatism). In the comments about Chinese TV series, audiences tend to identify ‘sexual conservatism’ ( $M=2.864$ ,  $MD=.510$ ). But, audiences tend to identify ‘sexual liberation’ ( $M=1.000$ ,  $MD=.000$ ) in the comments about American TV series.

Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series are associated with a statistically significant difference in identifying sexual conservatism and sexual liberation, according to the independent samples t-test performed. The distributions of comments on Chinese TV series and American TV series (skew=1.760, kurtosis=1.108) were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e., skew < | 2.0 | and kurtosis < | 9.0 | (Schmider et al., 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test. The independent samples t-test is associated with a statistically significant effect in sex conservatism and sexual liberation  $t(43) = 24.242$ ,  $p = .000$ . Thus, the Chinese audiences who comment on American TV series were associated with a statistically significance and tend to identify sexual liberation more than Chinese audiences who comment on Chinese TV series.

**Figure 5.9 The 'sexual conservatism' and 'sexual liberation' in the comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**



**Table 5.11 The mean value associated with 'conservative in sex' and 'sexual liberation' in comments about Chinese series and American series**

	N	Mean	SD
Chinese TV series	44	2.864	.510
American TV series	196	1.000	.000

'1= sexual liberation, 2=neutral, 3=conservative in sex'

In conclusion, this proves that that value content in Chinese TV series and American TV series are different. Chinese audiences are more likely to identify American values from American TV series than Chinese TV series, meanwhile, they are more likely to identify Chinese values from Chinese TV series than American TV series. The findings support hypothesis 1.3.

#### **5.2.2.2 Testing the overall judgment of values by comment**

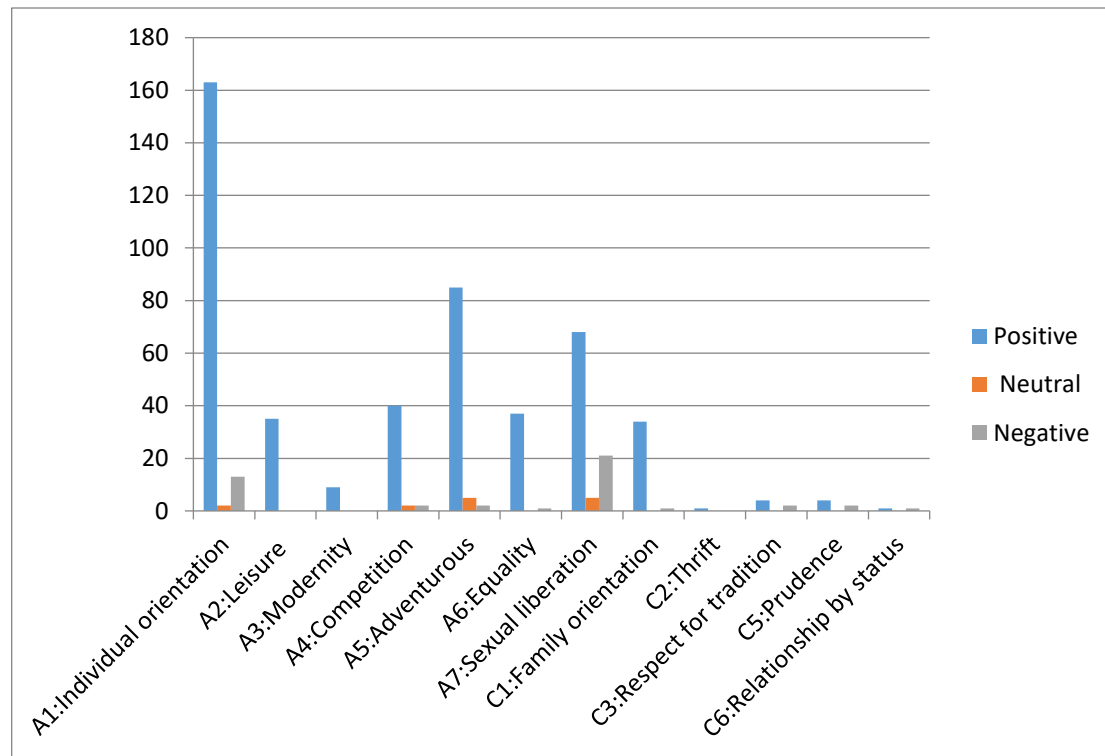
Overall value refers to the thematic or essential value, which sets the tone of the whole comment. It could be observed from the topic sentence. The overall evaluation of values is helpful to understanding the priorities in the audiences' value system. Comparing priorities between the comments about Chinese and American TV series could answer whether differences exist between the audiences who watch American TV series and the audiences who watch Chinese TV series regarding values.

Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series and Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series were associated with a statistically significant difference in attitude regarding the overall cultural values, according to an independent samples t-test performed. The distributions of comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series (skew= -.101, kurtosis=-1.593) were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e., skew < | 2.0 | and kurtosis < | 9.0 | (Schmider et al., 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test. The independent samples t-test is associated with a statistically significant effect in relate to the overall cultural value  $t(1035.871) = -5.183$ ,  $p = .000$ , and attitude toward these values  $t(1022.017) = 3.328$ ,  $p = .001$ . Thus, the Chinese audiences who comment about American TV series are associated with a statistically significant difference in identify the overall cultural values and their attitude toward these values are different compared with Chinese audiences who comment about Chinese TV series.

The Table 5.10 shows that Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are more likely to identify American values, as they have identifying seven American values, five Chinese values. Chinese audiences are more likely to be positive toward these seven American values, such as individual orientation (92% positive, 7% negative), leisure (100% positive, 0% negative), competition (90% positive, 5% negative), adventurous (93% positive, 2% negative), modernity (100% positive, 0% negative), equality (97% positive, 3% negative), sexual liberation (73% positive, 22% negative). For the five Chinese values, audiences are positive toward family orientation (97%

positive, 3% negative), thrift (100% positive, 0% negative), respect for tradition (67% positive, 33% negative), prudence (67% positive, 33% negative), and neutral toward relationship by status (50% positive, 50% negative).

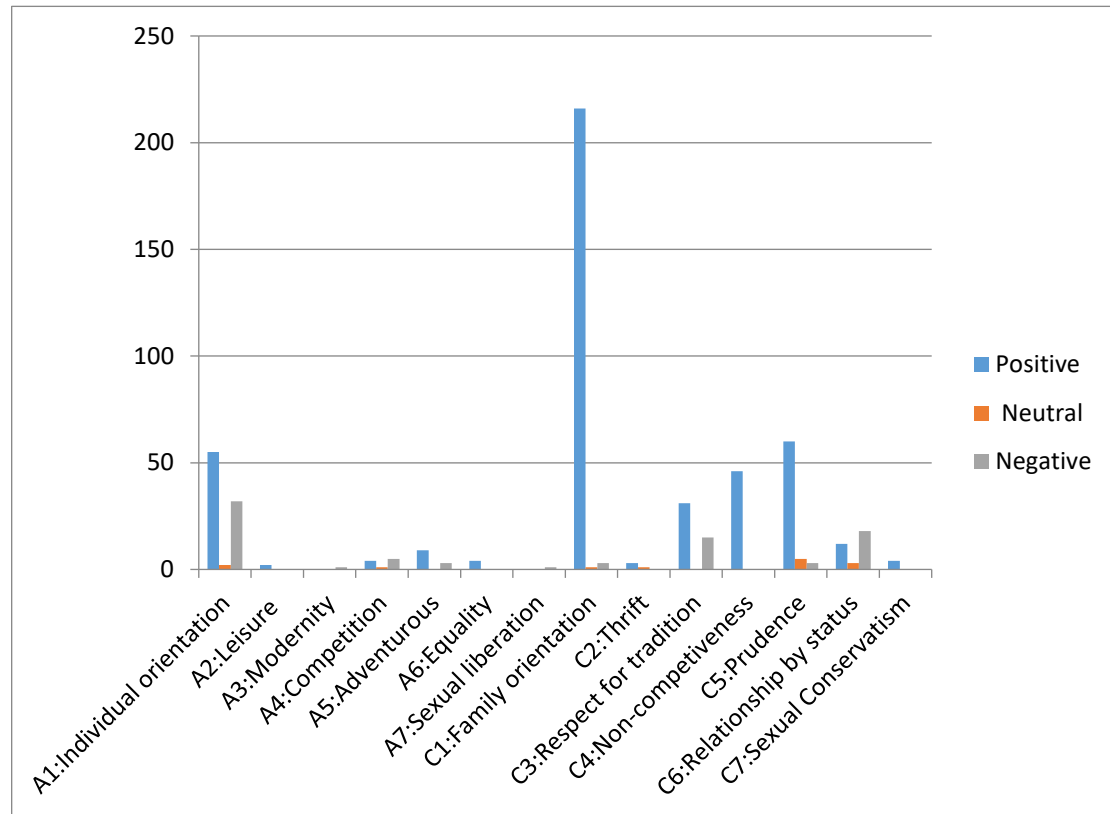
**Figure 5.10 Attitudes to the overall values in the comments about American TV series**



The value agendas in Chinese TV series are not as focused as in American series. As shown in figure 5.11, Chinese audiences identify all Chinese values and American values (7 Chinese values, 7 American values). The top four Chinese values that audiences perceived and focused on are family orientation, prudence, non-competitiveness, and respect for tradition. Moreover, Chinese audiences who watch Chinese television series more positive toward Chinese values, such as family oriented (98% positive, 1% negative), thrift (75% positive, 0% negative), respect for tradition (67% positive, 33% negative), non-competitiveness (100% positive, 0% negative), prudence (88% positive, 5% negative), and sexual conservatism (100% positive, 0% negative). Only the relationship by status category (36% positive, 55% negative), received more negative comments than positive one. Meanwhile, equality (100% positive, 0% negative), individual orientation (62% positive, 36% negative), leisure (100% positive, 0% negative), and adventurousness (75% positive, 25% negative) are American value that's that local Chinese TV series viewers supported. Chinese audiences tend

to be negative towards other American values, such as modernity (0% positive, 100% negative), competition (40% positive, 50% negative), and sexual liberation (0% positive, 100% negative), although the sample sizes were quite small.

**Figure 5.11 Attitudes to the overall values in the comments about Chinese TV series**



**Table 5.12 The attitude of Chinese audiences associated with overall values in comments about Chinese TV series and American TV series**

Overall evaluation		Attitude toward overall values			Total
		Positive	Neutral	Negative	
Chinese series  Chinese Values	Family orientation	216 98%	1 1%	3 1%	220 100%
	Thrift	3 75%	1 25%	0 0%	4 100%
	Respect for tradition	31 67%	0 0%	15 33%	46 100%
	Non-competitiveness	46 100%	0 0%	0 0%	46 100%
	Prudence	60	5	3	68

		88%	7%	5%	100%
	<b>Relationship by status</b>	12 36%	3 9%	18 55%	33 100%
	<b>Sexual conservatism</b>	4 100%	0 0%	0 0%	4 100%
<b>American values</b>	<b>Individual orientation</b>	55 62%	2 2%	32 36%	89 100%
	<b>Leisure</b>	2 100%	0 0%	0 0%	2 100%
	<b>Modernity</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 100%	1 100%
	<b>Competition</b>	4 40%	1 10%	5 50%	10 100%
	<b>Adventurousness</b>	9 75%	0 0%	3 25%	12 100%
	<b>Equality</b>	4 100%	0 0%	0 0%	4 100%
	<b>Sexual liberation</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 100%	1 100%
<b>American series</b>  <b>American Values</b>	<b>Individual orientation</b>	163 92%	2 1%	13 7%	178 100%
	<b>Leisure</b>	35 100%	0 0%	0 0%	35 100%
	<b>Modernity</b>	9 100%	0 0%	0 0%	9 100%
	<b>Competition</b>	40 90%	2 5%	2 5%	44 100%
	<b>Adventurousness</b>	85 93%	5 5%	2 2%	92 100%
	<b>Equality</b>	37 97%	0 0%	1 3%	38 100%
	<b>Sexual liberation</b>	68 73%	5 5%	21 22%	94 100%
<b>Chinese values</b>	<b>Family orientation</b>	34 97%	0 0%	1 3%	35 100%
	<b>Thrift</b>	1 100%	0 0%	0 0%	1 100%
	<b>Respect for tradition</b>	4 67%	0 0%	2 33%	6 100%
	<b>Prudence</b>	4 67%	0 0%	2 33%	6 100%
	<b>Relationship by status</b>	1 50%	0 0%	1 50%	2 100%

Above all, Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are more likely to be positive toward American values than those who watch Chinese TV series. Chinese audiences who watch Chinese TV series are more likely to be positive toward Chinese values than those who watch American TV series. Therefore, the findings support hypothesis 1.4.



### 5.3 Conclusion

The Chinese audience members who took their time to make comments on social media can be considered as active viewers of these shows and we assume that their views represent the Chinese audiences' attitudes toward American and Chinese cultural settings and values. By performing a content analysis on their comments, the findings show that there are notable differences in these attitudes. This demonstrates that television series in different cultures have different value agendas, and consolidates the premise of this study that the value priorities between American TV series and Chinese TV series are not the same.

The findings show that the people who identify with a particular set of cultural values, as the subjects of comments in this study, also tend to be supportive of the cultural values in that television series. The results show that Chinese audiences who watch American TV series tend to be more positive toward America and American people, while Chinese audiences who watch local Chinese TV series tend to be more positive toward China and Chinese people. The audiences' preference for televised reality is the gateway through which internal information is processed (Kastanakis & Voyer, 2014). But it also shows the Chinese audience's comparison of cultural settings through the process of watching American series. As shown in the findings, Chinese audiences who watch American TV series tend to be more positive towards America than China as they compare what they have seen about America in television with the reality in China. However, Chinese audiences who watch local Chinese TV series have a positive attitude toward China without any reference to America in a mono-cultural setting.

As far as cultural values are concerned, the American TV series and the Chinese TV series were shown as sources of different values for the audiences to identify with. The findings show that Chinese TV series contains content that includes Chinese values. The Chinese audiences have shown a positive attitude toward Chinese values, both in numbers and in their tones in their comments about Chinese TV series. The results also show that American TV series contain content that includes American values. Chinese audiences who watch American TV series have shown a positive attitude toward American values, which could be seen both from the number and tone of the audiences' comments. Chinese audiences who watch American TV series concentrate on American values rather than Chinese values. This means that the values orientation in American TV series is very clear and the content demonstrates a strong American value judgment that gives audiences no need to doubt the values presented. As the data shows, family orientation is the dominant value that audiences comment positively about Chinese TV series (n=216), which outnumbers all the positive

comments on other Chinese values combined (n=156). However, American values seems more widely distributed in American TV series, as Chinese audiences perceive most American values positively in their comments, despite the value of individual orientation standing out from the rest of the American values. *People's Daily* claims that American series are good at delivering and exporting their cultural values (Wei, 2014). These differences can be explained by the following reasons:

First, the homogeneity of Chinese television series due to censorship limits the presentation of diversified cultural values. The regulations governing television production clearly require that the content should include the core socialist values and Chinese fine traditions (Li, 2016). Therefore, television producers want to make sure their content will pass the censor, so the Chinese TV producers usually choose scripts that are safe, thus causing homogeneity in the themes of television series (Jian, 2013). According to the report of the Chinese Television Series Industry (2014), 56.64 percent of the total Chinese TV series produced are reality themed, such as family or urban romantic drama series; 41.49 percent are historical series, such as costume dramas; and other themes account for only 1.86 percent (Yun, 2015). Therefore, Chinese TV series are mainly focused on family and other traditional Chinese values.

Second, different cultural narratives result in demonstrating different cultural values even within similar story lines. 'Cultural narrative' refers to stories told through mass media or other cultural institutions and social networks (Rappaport, 2000). However, different cultures take different forms to render the experience meaningful in a narrative (Collins, 1985). For instance, compare television dramas *House of Cards* and *Empress in the Palace* in this study. These two series tell a similar story about how a leading character climbed to the top of the power structure, but the audiences identify different values through viewing the two series.

*House of Cards* tell a story about Frank Underwood, a ruthless congressman who initiates a plan to get rid of his opponents and make himself the US president. This show focuses on the bold, detailed plan of the process of climbing to greater power and shows the personal charisma of the leading characters as used to achieve their goals. This show was perceived by many Chinese audiences as a motivational story; comments focused on values such as individualism and competition. A Baidu Tieba user commented on individualism, stating, 'What I learned from *House of Cards* was that I need to be very clear about what I want, make an explicit plan to achieve my dream, and foresee and solve the problems on the way' (woaiyq7779, 2014). A Douban user commented on competition

in his review of the show, stating, '*Frank Underwood* steps on his opponent's body to move forward. We like to see him compete with other competitors and eliminate them one by one and attain the highest position of being president, rather than work hard and accept his position in life with achieve nothing' (Lingjiao, 2014).

*Empress in the Palace* told about an empire's concubine, Zhen Huan, who finds that the only way to survive in the palace is to defeat all her enemies and win the emperor's affection. She fights her way out by her wits and talents and became the most powerful woman, the empress of the country. This show focuses on how an innocent girl, who did not want to be caught in the fierce infighting, survives by defeating her competitors and becoming a cold and heartless person. Although she has the greatest power, she loses her friends, family, child, and husband, and ultimately sits lonely on the throne, which also corroborates a Chinese proverb, 'it is lonely at the top'. Most Chinese audiences identify the values from this show to be family orientation and non-competitiveness. A Douban user commented on family orientation: 'It is not worth to sacrifice family to fight for position and empire's favour, family should come first; what she (Zhen Huan) ultimately got are nothing but loneliness' (Li, 2014a). A comment on non-competitiveness made by a Douban user states: 'The wise way to survive is to be unambitious, non-competitive and prudent' (Shenzhuang, 2012); a television reviewer, Ding (2012), left a comment that was reposted by a Baidu Tieba user: 'The life in imperial harem twisted Zhen Huan's life, turned her, a simple girl into a manipulative and malicious woman. Although she kicked out all her enemies and became an empress, but, her inner heart is extremely torn apart, lonely and full of sorrow. From her life, we could see her beauty and emotions were ruined over time'.

Third, the audiences process cultural values based on different cultural settings. Although Chinese audiences mentioned that American values may not fit Chinese society, the audiences have shown an acceptance of American cultural settings. A Baidu Post Bar user, Mowow, comments: 'In *House of Cards*, there are too many sexual scenes. Sex must be a casual thing in the US; I cannot imagine this happening in China' (Mowow, 2014). Referring to a threesome scene in *House of Cards*, a comment mentioned that it was acceptable and helpful to release Frank's pressure (Lingjiao, 2014). However, Chinese audiences have a different attitude towards sex, as shown in a Douban comment on *Empress in the Palace*; 'the emperor's behaviour is unacceptable as he mingled with other woman and was not loyal to his wife' (Duoluo, 2012). This shows that when Chinese audiences view American TV series, they tend to think within the American cultural setting. There appears to be a negotiation between external values and internal values during the cognitive process. To

internalize American values, Chinese viewers separated the American cultural setting from the Chinese cultural setting and normalized these values in their minds.

Through the findings from content analysis and online community observations, it could be claimed that Chinese audiences identify different cultural values when viewing American TV series and Chinese TV series. People who watch American TV series are more likely to be exposed to American cultural values. But to define the impact that American TV series have had on Chinese audiences, we need to pin down the relationship between viewership and value perception. Besides, audiences' value predispositions and gratifications should also be considered as factors that could influence the impact of American TV series, as people have more freedom when choosing content online compared with choosing content on television. In the next chapter, the results of an online survey are discussed in order to address these questions.

## **Chapter 6 Does viewing more matter? The diversified cultivation effect of American television series on Chinese audiences' values**

"The online video sphere takes advantage of loopholes in policy to broadcast far more foreign programming than is allowed on film and TV. American dramas have grown in popularity online in recent years, particularly among younger, urban audiences. Government censors care about topics like ethnic relations, violence and sexual content, but they're more worried about ideological issues. Audiences grew up watching Yugoslavian programs, but now, everybody watches American dramas." (Feng & Wang, 2014)

-- Bree Feng and Shanshan Wang, *The New York Times*, 27 April, 2014

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the data findings, analysis and discussion related to research questions 5 to 10 of the study; the data is based on an online survey. Research question 5 explores the characteristics of Chinese audiences of American TV series, which are influenced by the societal and individual firewalls. Research question 6, 7 and 8 investigate the relationship between Chinese audiences' viewership and their perception of cultural values. Research question 9 focuses on the relationship between Chinese audiences' gratifications and their perception of cultural values. Research question 10 examine the relationship between Chinese audiences' viewership and their perception of American and Chinese realities.

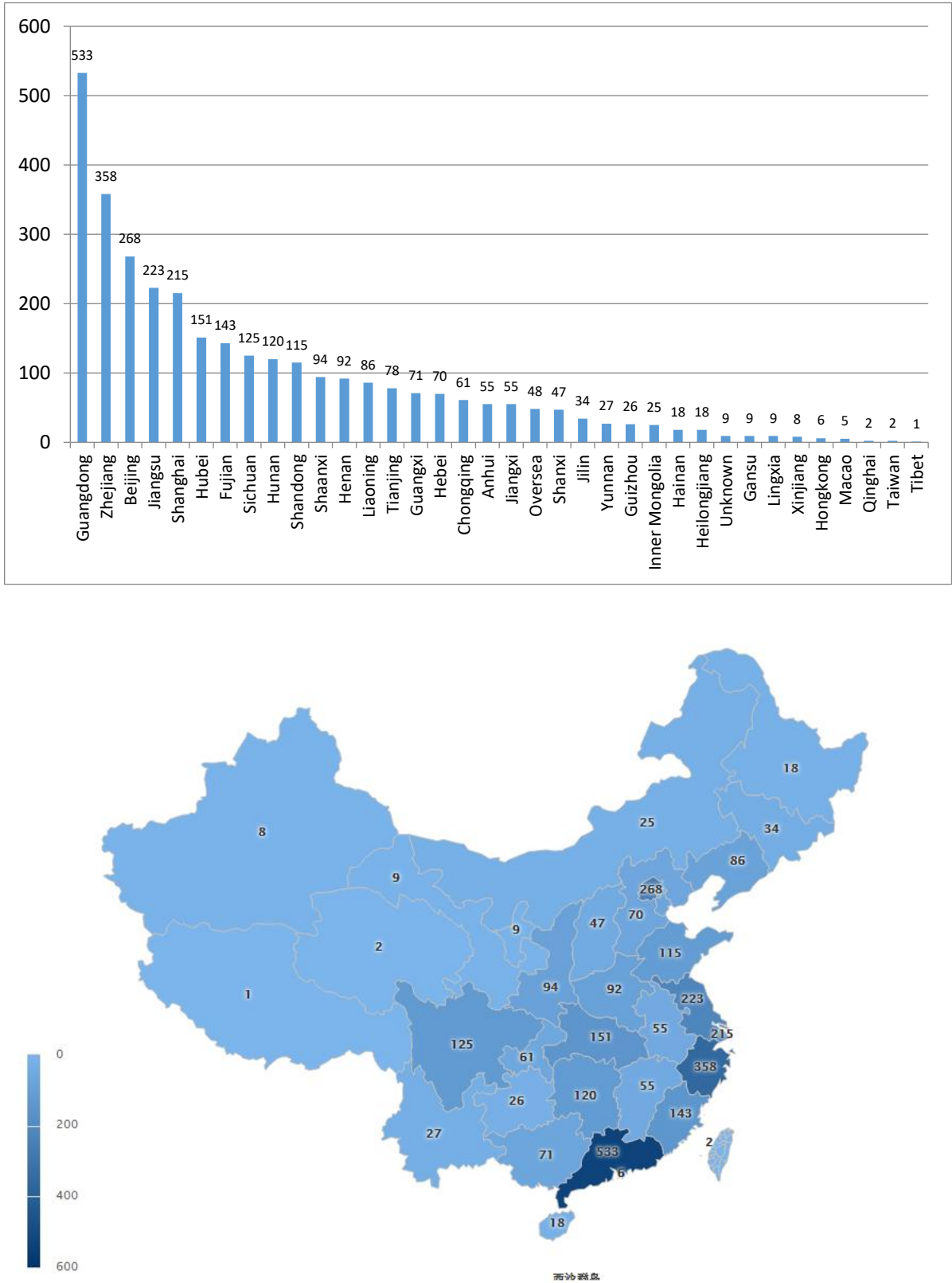
From early March, 2016 to the end of May 2016, there were 3,268 responses to the online survey. However, the responses included 61 participants with repeated IP addresses (multiple answers from the same household, and presumably the same person), 137 participants below 18 years of age, 48 overseas participants, and 9 participants whose geographic locations was unknown. These responses, as mentioned in the methodology chapter, were excluded, which left 3,015 valid responses that are included in the findings. The survey respondents' IP addresses showed that the participants were located in all 34 Chinese provinces and municipalities<sup>5</sup>. Figure 6.1 shows the geographic distribution

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<sup>5</sup> Municipalities are the highest level of classification of cities in China; their power is equal to that of a province. Provinces and municipalities comprise the first tier of administrative divisions. There are four municipalities in China: Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Chongqing.

of the survey participants.

Figure 6.1 The geographic distribution of participants in China



## 6.2 Findings

### 6.2.1 Demographic variables of survey respondents and firewalls

#### RQ2: Do individual and societal firewalls limit the impact of American TV series?

Demographic information was analysed in order to determine whether the survey participants match the target audiences for this study, which was described as an affluent young audience with a high education level (as mentioned in Chapter 3). The analyses included examining the percentage of the survey sample size in each province compared to the percentage of that province's gross domestic product (GDP), Internet users' population, and the overall population, in order to determine whether the sample is fairly distributed based on economic development, internet usage, and population. The top 16 provinces (88.15 percent of participants) in the rank of survey sample have been chosen as a comparison group. These 16 provinces are located in the areas with the most developed economies (amount to 82.76 of total GDP), developed Internet (with 73.15 percent of total number of netizens) and highly populated provinces (amounting to 68.95 percent of total population) in China.

**Table 6.1 Percentage of survey sample versus provincial ranking of 16 provinces' GDP, number of netizens and population<sup>6</sup>**

	Sample	GDP	Netizens	Population
Guangdong	533 17.68%	67,809.85 10.66%	7,768 11.29%	10,724 7.84%
Zhejiang	358 11.87%	40,173.03 6.32%	3,596 5.22%	5,508 4.03%
Beijing	268 8.89%	21,330.83 3.35%	1,647 2.39%	2,152 1.57%
Jiangsu	223 6.95%	65,088.32 10.23%	4,416 6.42%	7,960 5.82%
Shanghai	215 7.73%	23,567.70 3.70%	1,773 2.58%	2,426 1.77%
Hubei	151 5.01%	27,379.22 4.30%	2,723 3.96%	5,816 4.25%
Fujian	143 4.74%	24,055.76 3.78%	2,648 3.85%	3,806 2.78%
Sichuan	125 4.15%	28,536.66 4.49%	3,260 4.74%	8,140 5.95%
Hunan	120 3.98%	27,037.32 4.25%	2,685 3.90%	6,737 4.93%
Shandong	115	59,426.59	4,789	9,789

<sup>6</sup> The Netizen ranking data is from the report of China Internet Network Information Center CNNIC 2016, *The 37th Statistical Report on Internet Development in China (January 2016)*, China Internet Network Information Center, Beijing. Retrieved 26th May, from <http://www1.cnnic.cn/IDR/ReportDownloads/201604/P020160419390562421055.pdf>, the provincial GDP and population statistics is from National Bureau of Statistics of China NBSC 2014, *China Statistical Yearbook 2014*, China Statistics Press, Beijing, from <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2014/indexeh.htm>.

	3.43%	9.34%	6.96%	7.16%
Shaanxi	94 3.81%	17,689.94 2.78%	1,886 2.74%	3,775 2.76%
Henan	92 3.05%	28,626.58 4.50%	2,731 3.97%	4,391 3.21%
Liaoning	86 2.85%	34,938.24 5.49%	3,703 5.38%	9,436 6.90%
Tianjin	78 2.59%	15,726.93 2.47%	9,56 1.39%	1,517 1.11%
Guangxi	71 2.35%	15,672.89 2.46%	2,033 2.95%	4,754 3.48%
Hebei	70 2.32%	29,421.15 4.62%	3,731 5.42%	7,384 5.40%
<b>Total</b>	2742 88.15%	526,481.01 82.76%	50,345 73.15%	94,315 68.95%

\* GDP unit is 100 million Chinese Yuan (1 Yuan=0.15 USD), Netizen and Population unit is 10000 People.

The following demographic information has been compared to that of two other related surveys to clarify the representation of this survey. There is no available demographic information about American television viewers in China. However, there are researches about online video and popular culture consumption in China, which are relevant to this study, as American TV series are one of the most popular overseas cultural products among Chinese online TV viewers.

CNNIC, a government-authorized Internet administrative and research organization, conducted a survey, *The Online Video Consumption Among Chinese Internet Users (CNNIC 2014)*, by random sampling 2,526 participants in 20 cities through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) during March, 2014. The CNNIC survey was intended to find out Chinese online video users' demographic information, video consumption behaviors, and purchasing power. Another survey, *The Lifestyles of Chinese Online Popular Culture Fans* (iResearch, 2016) was conducted by iResearch, an independent market research company based in Shanghai, which surveyed 2,064 participants online during February, 2016. The iResearch survey focuses on studying the online popular culture fans' community groups (TV series, film, game, animation), consumption behavior (video and merchandise consumption), and life attitudes. Consumption behavior and life attitudes were surveyed through a questionnaire on the Oops website (偶扑网 <https://www.iloveoops.com/>, an online interaction platform for popular culture fans) and the iResearch survey community (艾瑞调研社区 <https://survey.iclick.cn/>). The fans' community groups and their demographic information was gathered from the Chinese social media website, Weibo, by analysing 60 million popular culture fans' Weibo accounts.



According to the survey in this study, 2,509 participants watched American TV series and 506 reported that they did not. The following table compares the demographic information of the 2,509 American TV series viewers with two other surveys.

The gender distribution of the survey respondents indicates that there are more female participants (69.7%) than male (30.3%) (see Table 6.2). The ratio of female survey participants is higher than that in the results found by CNNIC for online video consumers (42.5%) but close to that in the research on fans of online popular culture (70.7%, Table 6.2). This may be interpreted as the difference between males and females in the preference of video consumption and survey participation.

**Table 6.2 The gender status of participants**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>CNNIC</b>	<b>iResearch</b>
Male	759	30.3	57.5	29.3
Female	1,750	69.7	42.5	70.7
Total	2,509	100	100	100

The age distribution of the respondents shows that 86.1 percent of the respondents are aged 18-25, suggesting that Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are from a younger generation (Table 6.3). This appears to corroborate other data in which 54 percent of Chinese Internet users (CNNIC, 2016) and 93.1 percent of online popular culture fans (iResearch, 2016) are reported to be less than 30 years old, an age in which they are more open to the influence of globalization. As mentioned in the literature, psychologist Arnett (2000) claims that globalization has a significant influence on cultural identity and is particularly salient on these viewers aged 18-25, which is the period of identity exploration and formation. This may also be explained by the fact that audiences within the 18-30 age group, who have both the motivation to learn English and access American culture, are more likely to consume American television series (Jiang, 2014a; Zeng & Wei, 2013a).

**Table 6.3 The age distribution of participants**

Age	Frequency	Percentage	CNNIC	iResearch
Below 18			29.3	7.3
18-25	2,161	86.1	31.8	68.3
26-30	273	10.9		17.5
31-40	60	2.4	25.4	3.8
41-50	12	0.5	9.9	2.9
51-60	2	0.1	3.6	0.2
Above 61	1	0		
Total	2,509	100 %	100 %	100 %

Examining the Chinese viewer's education status shows that American television viewers have a relatively higher educational level, showing that 96.4 percent of the survey participants (Table 6.4) compared to 25.6 percent of the total population of Internet users (CNNIC, 2016) and 74.4 percent of online pop culture fans, attained a college or higher educational level. This could be explained by the knowledge threshold caused by American culture receptivity and the English language ability required to understand American TV series.

**Table 6.4 The education status of participants**

Education	Frequency	Percentage	CNNIC	iResearch
Masters and PhD	381	15.2	25.6	74.4
College and Bachelors	2,037	81.2		
Senior High	51	2.0	33.4	14.1

Junior High	36	1.4	33.7	10.3
Primary School	4	0.2	7.3	1.2
Total	2,509	100	100	100

## 6.2.2 Chinese viewers of American TV series versus Chinese non-viewers of American TV series with regard to cultural values

*Hypothesis 3.1: Viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than non-viewers do.*

### 6.2.2.1 Difference between viewers of American TV series and non-viewers in relation to Chinese values

The mean scores of viewers of American TV series versus non-viewers are shown in Table 6.5. People who do not watch American TV series (N=506) have a more positive attitude toward Chinese values, such as relationship by status  $M=3.14$  ( $SD=.87$ ), sexual conservatism  $M=3.17$  ( $SD=1.06$ ), and thrift  $M=3.50$  ( $SD=1.00$ ), compared to people who do watch American TV series (N=2509), with the attitude toward relationship by status  $M=3.01$  ( $SD=.87$ ), sexual conservatism  $M=3.07$  ( $SD=1.01$ ), and thrift  $M=3.47$  ( $SD=.93$ ). However, Chinese people who do watch American TV series (N=2509) have an equal or more positive attitude toward family orientation  $M=3.90$  ( $SD=.78$ ), prudence  $M=3.52$  ( $MD=.87$ ), non-competitiveness  $M=2.78$  ( $MD=.98$ ), and respect for tradition  $M=3.17$  ( $MD=.88$ ), compared to people who do not watch American TV series (N=506), with the attitude toward family orientation  $M=3.81$  ( $MD=.84$ ), prudence  $M=3.52$  ( $MD=.93$ ), non-competitiveness  $M=2.71$  ( $SD=.96$ ), and respect for tradition  $M=3.09$  ( $MD=.91$ ).

**Table 6.5 The mean value associated with Chinese viewers of American TV series and non-viewers in their attitude to Chinese values**

	Watch American series or not	N	Mean	SD
Overall Chinese values	Yes	2,509	3.27	0.52
	No	506	3.28	0.56
Sexual Conservatism	Yes	2,509	3.07	1.01
	No	506	3.17	1.06
Relationship by status	Yes	2,509	3.01	0.87
	No	506	3.14	0.87
Prudence	Yes	2,509	3.52	0.87

	No	506	3.52	0.93
<b>Family orientation</b>	Yes	2,509	3.90	0.78
	No	506	3.81	0.84
<b>Non-competitiveness</b>	Yes	2,509	2.78	0.98
	No	506	2.71	0.96
<b>Respect for tradition</b>	Yes	2,509	3.17	0.88
	No	506	3.09	0.91
<b>Thrift</b>	Yes	2,509	3.47	0.93
	No	506	3.50	1.00

To test the hypothesis that the people who watch American TV series and people who do not are associated with statistically significant differences in attitude toward Chinese values, an independent samples t-test was performed. The distribution of people who watch American TV series and those people who do not were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e., skew  $< | 2.0 |$  and kurtosis  $< | 9.0 |$  (Schmider et al., 2010). In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test. The independent samples t-test was associated with no statistically significant effect regarding sexual conservatism  $t(703.48) = -1.95$ ,  $p = .052$ , prudence  $t(692.98) = -.07$ ,  $p = .94$ , non-competitiveness  $t(3013) = 1.44$ ,  $p = .15$ , respect for tradition  $t(3013) = 1.70$ ,  $p = .09$ , and thrift  $t(696.67) = -.81$ ,  $p = .42$ . This means there are no statistically significant differences in attitude towards sexual conservatism, prudence, non-competitiveness, respect for tradition, and thrift between American TV series viewers and non-viewers. However, the independent samples t-test is associated with a statistically significant effect in family orientation  $t(691.03) = 2.19$ ,  $p = .029$ , and relationship by status  $t(3013) = -3.168$ ,  $p = .002$ . Thus, the people who watch American TV series are associated with a statistically significant difference that is more positive toward family orientation than people who do not watch American TV series. But the people who do not watch American TV series are also associated with a statistically significant difference that is positive toward relationship by status as compared to people who do watch American TV series. Effect size measure Cohen's d was estimated at .11 for family orientation and -.15 for relationship by status, which is a very small effect based on Cohen's (1992) guidelines.

Above all, the independent samples t-test was not associated with a statistically significant effect in the overall Chinese values  $t(3013) = -.25$ ,  $p = .80$ . This means the people who watch American TV series have no statistically significant different attitude towards Chinese values compared with non-viewers. These findings mean that hypothesis 3.1 – that viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values than non-viewers – is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis that viewers are not less likely to hold Chinese values than non-viewers.

### 6.2.2.2 Difference between viewers of American TV series and non-viewers in relation to American values

The mean score of viewers of American TV series versus non-viewers are shown in Table 6.6. People who do watch American TV series (N=2,509) see a numerically more positive attitude toward American values, such as sexual liberation M=3.48 (SD=1.00), competition M=3.66 (SD= .77), modernity M=3.80 (SD= .79), individual orientation M=3.78 (SD= .85), leisure M=3.65 (SD= .86), equality M=3.43 (SD= .83), and adventurousness M=3.53 (SD= .85) compared to people who do not watch American TV series (N=506) with the attitude toward sexual liberation M=3.29 (SD=1.09), competition M=3.62 (SD= .83), modernity M=3.63 (SD= .87), individual orientation M=3.64 (SD= .97), leisure M=3.61 (SD= .91), equality M=3.37 (SD= .89), and adventurousness M=3.31 (SD= .97).

**Table 6.6 The mean value associated with Chinese viewers of American TV series and non-viewers in their attitude to American values**

	Watch American TV series or not	N	Mean	SD
<b>Overall American values</b>	Yes	2,509	3.62	0.01
	No	506	3.50	0.03
<b>Sexual liberation</b>	Yes	2,509	3.48	1.00
	No	506	3.29	1.09
<b>Competition</b>	Yes	2,509	3.66	0.77
	No	506	3.62	0.83
<b>Modernity</b>	Yes	2,509	3.80	0.79
	No	506	3.63	0.87
<b>Individual orientation</b>	Yes	2,509	3.78	0.85
	No	506	3.64	0.97
<b>Leisure</b>	Yes	2,509	3.65	0.86
	No	506	3.61	0.91
<b>Equality</b>	Yes	2,509	3.43	0.83
	No	506	3.37	0.89
<b>Adventurous</b>	Yes	2,509	3.53	0.85
	No	506	3.31	0.97

To test the hypothesis that the people who watch American TV series and people who do not are associated with statistically significant differences in attitude toward American values, an independent samples t-test was performed. The distributions of people who watch American TV series and who do not were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e., skew

$< | 2.0 |$  and kurtosis  $< | 9.0 |$  (Schmider et al., 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test. The independent samples t-test was associated with a statistically significant effect in American values such as sexual liberation  $t(685.37) = 3.96, p = .000$ ; competition  $t(691.64) = 1.13, p = .26$ ; modernity  $t(685.34) = 3.98, p = .000$ ; individual orientation  $t(671.34) = 3.00, p = .003$ ; leisure  $t(3,013) = .96, p = .34$ ; equality  $t(689.24) = 1.44, p = .15$ ; and adventurousness  $t(670.59) = 4.73, p = .000$ . Thus, the people who watch American TV series are associated with a statistically significant more positive attitude toward American values, especially sexual liberation, modernity, individual orientation, and adventurousness, than people who do not watch American TV series. Cohen's d was estimated at .18 for sexual liberation, .20 for modernity, .15 for individual orientation, and .24 for adventurousness, which is a small or moderate effect based on Cohen (1992)'s guidelines.

Above all, the independent samples t-test was associated with a statistically significant effect in the overall American values  $t(680.74) = 4.65, p = .000$ . Cohen's d was estimated at 5.37 for overall American value, which is a very large effect based on Cohen (1992)'s guidelines. This means that the people who watch American TV series have a significantly positive attitude towards American values compared with non-viewers. This support hypothesis 3.1 that viewers are more likely to favour American values than non-viewers.

### **6.2.3 Time of exposure and value endorsement**

*Hypothesis 3.2: Heavy viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than light viewers do.*

#### **6.2.3.1 Total exposure of American TV series and perception of American reality**

Before testing for the cultivation effect on values (second order effects), the cultivation effect's impact on the perception of American reality (first order effects) should be tested. Because the audiences' perception of American reality has the most directly influence on their perception of cultural values through American television consumption. In other words, believing in what they saw on television is the foundation of value cognition. Pearson's correlation coefficient shows that there are correlations between perception of American reality and overall American values at  $r = .22, p = .00$ , and overall Chinese values at  $r = .06, p = .004$  in this study. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the prediction of viewing time on the perception of American reality; the results are shown in Table 6.7.

**Table 6.7 Relationship between exposure to American TV series and perceptions of American reality for total sample (n=2,509)**

	Perceptions of American reality		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.121 <sup>***</sup>		
Age		-.034	.001
Gender		.001	.000
Education		.074 <sup>***</sup>	.005
Wealth		.327 <sup>***</sup>	.106
Visited US or not		.042 <sup>*</sup>	.002
<b>2. Total viewing time of American series</b>	.007 <sup>***</sup>	.086 <sup>***</sup>	.007

Overall R<sup>2</sup>=.128, F(1, 2502)=21.222, p=.000.

\*p<.05. \*\*\* p<.01.

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis has been used to test whether the total viewing time of American TV series significantly predicted participants' perception of American reality. The results of the regression indicate that the total viewing time explains 0.7 percent of the variance (R<sup>2</sup>= .128, F (6, 2502) =61.30, p<.001). It has been found that total viewing time significantly predicted the perceptions of American reality ( $\beta$ = .086, p<.001) when demographical variables were controlled. A test conducted to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (Total viewing, Tolerance = .99, VIF = 1.01).

The set of demographic variables predicted a significant variable in the respondents' perceptions of American reality. Education and wealth are predictors of American reality, as people with a higher education level and a better economic condition tend to think what they see on American television is more real compared to less educated and less affluent people. Moreover, travelling to the US or not, is also a predictor of American reality as people who have not been to the US are more likely to believe that what they see on American television is real more than people who have been to America.

Controlling for the effect of demographic variables, **the total time spent** viewing American TV series significantly predicted the perception of American reality, which means the more time audiences spend viewing American TV series, the more likely they think what they see on American TV series is real. This shows online viewing of American TV series has impact on Chinese audiences' perceptions of American reality, which supports the first order of cultivation effect.

### 6.2.3.2 Total exposure of American TV series and perceptions of Chinese values

To test hypothesis 3.2 (about Chinese value perception and the time of exposure to American TV series), hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted. Regressions were performed for the total sample (N=2,509), males (n=759), and females (n=1,750) on each of the seven criterion measures of Chinese values (i.e., family orientation, respect for tradition, sexual conservatism, prudence, relationship by status, thrift, and non-competitiveness). To answer this research question, demographic variables were entered in the first stage, followed by separate total time of American TV viewing measures, predicting each criterion variable. The results of the analyses involving all the respondents are presented in Table 6.8.

**Table 6.8 Relationship between exposure to American series and perceptions of Chinese values for total sample (n=2,509), by value**

	<u>Overall Chinese value<sup>a</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.020**		
Age		.000	.000
Gender		-.038	.001
Education		.070**	.005
Wealth		.052*	.003
Visited US or not		.109**	.011
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.001	-.023	.001
	<u>Relationship by status<sup>c</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.009**		
Age		.011	.000
Gender		-.074**	.005
Education		.025	.001
Wealth		.028	.001
Visited US or not		.061**	.004
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.000	-.015	.000
	<u>Family orientation<sup>c</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.038**		
Age		-.052*	.003
Gender		.035	.001
Education		.116**	.013
Wealth		.105**	.011
Visited US or not		.086**	.007
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.000	-.007	.000
	<u>Respect for tradition<sup>g</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>			
Age			
Gender			
Education			
Wealth			
Visited US or not			
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>			

	<u>Sexual conservatism<sup>b</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.016**		
Age		-.045*	.002
Gender		.083**	.007
Education		.014	.000
Wealth		.026	.001
Visited US or not		.063**	.004
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.002*	-.045*	.002
	<u>Prudence<sup>d</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.015**		
Age		-.018	.000
Gender		-.009	.000
Education		.073**	.005
Wealth		.033	.001
Visited US or not		.089**	.008
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.000	-.014	.000
	<u>Non-competitiveness<sup>f</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.014**		
Age		.079**	.006
Gender		-.078**	.006
Education		-.007	.000
Wealth		-.022	.000
Visited US or not		.031	.001
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.000	.017	.000
	<u>Thrift<sup>h</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>			
Age			
Gender			
Education			
Wealth			
Visited US or not			
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>			



<b>1.Demographics</b>	.008**		
<b>Age</b>		.041*	.002
<b>Gender</b>		-.058**	.003
<b>Education</b>		.020	.000
<b>Wealth</b>		.032	.001
<b>Visited US or not</b>		.041*	.002
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.000		
		-.007	.000
a Overall $R^2=.020$ , $F(1, 2502)=1.382$ , $p=.240$ . b Overall $R^2=.018$ , $F(1,2502)=5.233$ , $p=.022$ . c Overall $R^2=.010$ , $F(1,2502)=.589$ , $p=.443$ . d Overall $R^2=.015$ , $F(1,2502)=.511$ , $p=.475$ . e Overall $R^2=.038$ , $F(1,2502)=.120$ , $p=.729$ .			

<b>1.Demographics</b>	.011**		
<b>Age</b>		-.022	.000
<b>Gender</b>		-.056**	.003
<b>Education</b>		.058**	.003
<b>Wealth</b>		.022	.000
<b>Visited US or not</b>		.072**	.005
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.000		
		-.020	.000
f Overall $R^2=.015$ , $F(1,2502)=.765$ , $p=.382$ . g Overall $R^2=.008$ , $F(1,2502)=.117$ , $p=.732$ . h Overall $R^2=.012$ , $F(1,2502)=1.032$ , $p=.310$ . * $p<.05$ . ** $p<.01$ .			

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to test whether the total viewing of American TV series significantly predicted participants' perceptions of Chinese values. The results of the regressions indicate the total viewing time explained 0.1 percent of the variances ( $R^2=.020$ ,  $F(6, 2502)=8.685$ ,  $p<.001$ ). It was found that total viewing time did not significantly predict the overall Chinese value ( $\beta=-.023$ ,  $p=.240$ ). Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (Total viewing, Tolerance = .99, VIF = 1.01).

The set of demographic variables did predict significant variables in the respondents' perceptions of Chinese values. Age was a significant individual predictor of values such as non-competitiveness and respect for tradition, with older participants favouring non-competitiveness and tradition more than younger participants. However, age is also a predictor of sexual conservatism and family orientation, with older participants favouring sexual conservatism and family less than younger people. Gender is a predictor of values such as sexual conservatism, with women favouring sexual conservatism more than men. However, gender also predicts relationship by status, non-competitiveness, respect for tradition, and thrift, with men favouring relationship by status, non-competitiveness, tradition, and thrift more than women. Education is a predictor of prudence, family orientation, and thrift, with people who have achieved higher educational levels favouring prudence, family and thrift more than less educated people. Wealth was a predictor of family orientation; people with a good economic condition favouring family more than people that are not affluent. This means that audiences, even those with higher education and a higher standard of living, still hold Chinese values in some extent. Whether the respondent have visited America or not is a predictor of values such as relationship by status, sexual conservatism, prudence, family orientation, respect for tradition, and thrift, which means that people who have not been to the US favouring status, sexual conservatism, prudence, family orientation, tradition, and thrift more than people who have been to America. Moreover, education, wealth, and visiting America or not are predictors of

the overall Chinese value. This means that audiences with higher education seems more supportive of the overall Chinese value than people with lower education; audiences with higher income levels seem more supportive of the overall Chinese value than people with lower incomes; and audiences who have not been to America tend to be supportive of the overall Chinese value than people who have been to America.

By controlling for the effect of demographic variables, the amount of time spent viewing American TV series significantly predicted the preference for sexual conservatism, with heavy viewers of American TV series less likely to prefer sexual conservatism than light viewers of American TV series, but failed to predict other Chinese values. Moreover, the total time of viewing American TV series did not predict the overall Chinese value. The findings reject hypothesis 3.2 that heavy viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values than light viewers do, in favor of the alternative hypothesis that heavy viewers are not less likely to hold Chinese values than light viewers.

### 6.2.3.3 Total exposure to American TV series and perceptions of American values

To test hypothesis 3.2 (about American value perceptions and the amount of time spent viewing American TV series), hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted. Regressions were performed for the total sample (N=2,509), males (n=759), and females (n=1,750) on each of the seven criterion measures of American values (i.e., individual orientation, modernity, sexual liberation, adventurousness, equality, leisure, competition). To answer this research question, demographic variables were entered in the first stage, followed by separate total time of American TV viewing measures, predicting each criterion variable. The results of the analyses involving all the respondents are presented in Table 6.9.

**Table 6.9 Relationship between American TV series exposure and perceptions of American values for total sample (n=2,509), by value**

	<u>Overall American value<sup>a</sup></u>				<u>Sexual Liberation<sup>b</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	β	sr <sup>2</sup>		R <sup>2</sup> change	β	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.053**			<b>1.Demographics</b>	.061**		
Age		-.095**	.008	Age		-.087**	.007
Gender		.053**	.003	Gender		.183**	.032
Education		.137**	.018	Education		.031	.001
Wealth		.131**	.017	Wealth		.109**	.012
Visited US or not		.019	.000	Visited US or not		-.015	.000
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.007**			<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.005		
		.087**	.007			.069**	.007

	<u>Competition<sup>c</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.016 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.051 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Gender		-.033	.001
Education		.080 <sup>**</sup>	.006
Wealth		.080 <sup>**</sup>	.006
Visited US or not		-.014	.000
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.000	.022	.000
	<u>Individual Orientation<sup>e</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.054 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.057 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Gender		.070 <sup>**</sup>	.005
Education		.136 <sup>**</sup>	.018
Wealth		.119 <sup>**</sup>	.014
Visited US or not		.081 <sup>**</sup>	.006
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.002 <sup>*</sup>	.047 <sup>*</sup>	.002
	<u>Equality<sup>g</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.010 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.044 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Gender		-.019	.000
Education		.046 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Wealth		.077 <sup>**</sup>	.006
Visited US or not		.005	.000
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.000	.003	.000
a Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.060, F(1, 2502)=19.795, p=.000. b Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.065, F(1,2502)= 12.650, p=.000. c Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.016, F(1, 2502)=1.235, p=.267. d Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.038, F(1, 2502)=21.303, p=.000. e Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.056, F(1,2502)=5.786, p=.016.			

	<u>Modernity<sup>d</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.030 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.059 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Gender		-.010	.000
Education		.136 <sup>**</sup>	.018
Wealth		.078 <sup>**</sup>	.006
Visited US or not		.017	.000
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.008 <sup>**</sup>	.091 <sup>**</sup>	.008
	<u>Leisure<sup>f</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.015 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.057 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Gender		.035	.001
Education		.094 <sup>**</sup>	.008
Wealth		.016	.000
Visited US or not		.022	.000
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.003 <sup>**</sup>	.055 <sup>**</sup>	.003
	<u>Adventurousness<sup>h</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.010 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.033	.001
Gender		-.042 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Education		.058 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Wealth		.058 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Visited US or not		-.017	.000
<b>2. Total viewing American series</b>	.004 <sup>**</sup>	.066 <sup>**</sup>	.004
f Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.018, F(1, 2502)=7.635, p=.006. g Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.010, F(1, 2502)=.023, p=.878. h Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.014, F(1, 2502)=11.085, p=.001. * p<.05. ** p<.01.			

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses has been used to test whether the total viewing time of American TV series significantly predicted participants' perceptions of American values. The results of the regressions indicated that the total viewing explained 0.7 percent of the variances ( $R^2 = .060$ ,  $F(6, 2502) = 6.324$ ,  $p < .001$ ); it was found that total viewing time significantly predicted perceptions of overall American value ( $\beta = .087$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (Total viewing, Tolerance = .99, VIF = 1.01).

The set of demographic variables did predict significant variables in the respondents' perception of American values. Age was a significant individual predictor of values such as sexual liberation, competition, modernity, individualism, leisure, and equality, with older participants favour these

values less than younger participants. Gender is a predictor of sexual liberation and individualism, with women favouring sexual liberation and individualism more than men. However, gender also predicts adventurousness, with men favouring adventurousness more than women. Education is a predictor of competition, individualism, modernity, leisure, equality, and adventurous, with people with higher education level favouring these values more than less educated people. Wealth was a predictor of sexual liberation, competition, modernity, individualism, equality, and adventurous, with people in higher income favouring these values more than people in lower income. This supports the assumption that Chinese audiences of American TV series who have a high education and income are more supportive of American values. Visiting America is a predictor of values such as individualism, which means that people who have not been to the US favour individualism more than people who have been to America. Moreover, age, gender, education, wealth, and visiting the US or not are predictors of the overall American value. This means that younger audiences tend to favour the overall American value than older audiences; female audiences tend to be more supportive of the overall American value than male audiences; audiences with a higher education seems more favorable towards the overall American value than people with a lower amount of education; audiences with higher incomes seem more favorable towards the overall American value than people with lower incomes; and audiences who have not been to America tend to be more supportive of the overall American value than people who have been to America.

Controlling for the effect of demographic variables, the set of total time of viewing American TV series significantly predicted sexual liberation, modernity, individualism, leisure, and adventurousness, which means heavy viewers of American series are more supportive of American values regarding sexual liberation, modernity, individualism, leisure, and adventurous, than light viewers of American series, but failed to significantly predict other American values. However, the total time of viewing American TV series did predict the overall American value, which means heavy viewers of American series are more supportive of overall American value than light viewers of American series. The findings support the hypothesis 3.2 that heavy viewers are more likely to favour American values than light viewers do.

#### **6.2.4 Length of exposure and value endorsement**

*Hypothesis 3.3: Long-term viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than short-term viewers do.*

#### 6.2.4.1 Length of exposure and perceptions of American reality

Length of exposure is another potential indicator of a cultivation effect (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Shanahan & Morgan 1999b). Long-term viewers believe that what they see on television is real more often than short-term viewers (Vu & Lee, 2013). The more the viewers believe in what they see on American television, the greater the chance that value cultivation factors can affect the audiences' views (Shrum et al., 2005). Therefore, the effect on Chinese audiences' perception of American reality should be tested first. The result of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis on using the viewing length to predict the Chinese viewer's perceptions of American reality is shown in Table 6.10.

**Table 6.10 Relationship between the length of exposure to American TV series and perceptions of American reality for total sample (n=2509)**

	<u>Perceptions of American reality</u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.121 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.046 <sup>*</sup>	0.002
Gender		-.008	0.000
Education		.057 <sup>**</sup>	0.003
Wealth		.324 <sup>**</sup>	0.103
Visited US or not		.043 <sup>*</sup>	0.002
<b>2. Viewing length of exposure to American series</b>	.010 <sup>**</sup>	.101 <sup>**</sup>	0.009

Overall R<sup>2</sup>=.130, F (1, 2502)=27.347, p=.000.

\*p<.05. \*\*p<.01.

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to test whether the viewing length of American TV series significantly predicted participants' perceptions of American reality. The results of the regression analysis indicated that the viewing length explained 1 percent of the variances (R<sup>2</sup>= .130, F (6, 2502) =62.462, p<.001). It was found that viewing length significantly predicted perceptions of American reality ( $\beta$ = .101, p<.001). Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (Viewing length, Tolerance = .92, VIF = 1.08).

The set of demographic variables did predict significant variables in respondents' perceptions of American reality. Age did predict American reality, with older audience tending to believe that what they saw on American TV series are real less often than is the case with younger audiences.

Education and wealth are predictors of American reality as people with higher education levels and higher incomes tend to think what they saw on American television is more real than less educated and less affluent people. Moreover, visiting America is also a predictor of perceptions of American reality as people who have not been to the US are more likely to believe that what they see on American television series is real than people who have been to America.

Controlling for the effect of demographic variables, the viewing length of American TV series significantly predicted perceptions of American reality, which means the long-term viewers are more likely to believe that what they saw on American TV series is real than short-term viewers. This supports the first order cultivation effect, suggesting that the more time audiences spend watching television, the more they believe the presentation of reality in the televised world.

#### 6.2.4.2 Length of exposure and perceptions of Chinese values

To test hypothesis 3.3 (about Chinese value perceptions and length of exposure to American TV series), hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted. Regressions were performed for the total sample (N=2509), males (n=759), and females (n=1750) on each of the seven criterion measures of Chinese values (i.e., family orientation, respect for tradition, sexual conservatism, prudent, relationship by status, thrift, non-competitiveness). To answer this research question, demographic variables were entered in the first stage, followed by separate length of exposure to American series measure, predicting each criterion variable. The results of analysis involving all respondents are presented in Table 6.11.

**Table 6.11 Relationship between the length of exposure to American TV series and perceptions of Chinese values for total Sample (n=2,509), by value**

	<u>Overall Chinese value<sup>a</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.020**		
Age		.007	.000
Gender		-.033	.001
Education		.083**	.006
Wealth		.055**	.003
Visited US or not		.108**	.011
<b>2.Viewing length of American series</b>	.004**	-.064**	.004
	<u>Relationship by status<sup>c</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>

	<u>Sexual Conservatism<sup>b</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.016**		
Age		-.031	.001
Gender		.093**	.008
Education		.041*	.002
Wealth		.034	.001
Visited US or not		.062**	.004
<b>2.Viewing length of American series</b>	.016**	-.133**	.016
	<u>Prudence<sup>d</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>

<b>1.Demographics</b>	.009**		
Age		.016	.000
Gender		-.069**	.005
Education		.036	.001
Wealth		.031	.001
Visited US or not		.061**	.004
<b>2.Viewing length of American series</b>	.003**	-.056**	.003
	<u>Family orientation<sup>c</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.038**		
Age		-.058**	.003
Gender		.030	.001
Education		.101**	.009
Wealth		.099**	.010
Visited US or not		.087**	.007
<b>2.Viewing length of American series</b>	.004**	.068**	.004
	<u>Respect for tradition<sup>g</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.008**		
Age		.048**	.002
Gender		-.053*	.003
Education		.034	.001
Wealth		.037	.001
Visited US or not		.041*	.002
<b>2.Viewing length of American series</b>	.004**	-.068**	.004
a Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.024, F(1, 2502)=9.611, p=.002. b Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.033, F(1,2502)=42.351, p=.000. c Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.012, F(1, 2502)=7.355, p=.007. d Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.016, F(1, 2502)=1.378, p=.240. e Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.043, F(1, 2502)=11.162, p=.001.			

<b>1.Demographics</b>	.015**		
Age		-.020	.000
Gender		-.010	.000
Education		.067**	.004
Wealth		.031	.001
Visited US or not		.089**	.008
<b>2.Viewing length of American series</b>	.001	.024	.001
	<u>Non-competitiveness<sup>f</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.014**		
Age		.083**	.006
Gender		-.075**	.005
Education		.003	.000
Wealth		-.018	.000
Visited US or not		.032	.001
<b>2.Viewing length of American series</b>	.002*	-.043*	.002
	<u>Thrifty<sup>h</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.011**		
Age		-.020	.000
Gender		-.054**	.003
Education		.062**	.003
Wealth		.023	.000
Visited US or not		.072**	.005
<b>2.Viewing length of American series</b>	.000	-.022	.000
f Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.016, F(1, 2502)=4.378, p=.037. g Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.012, F(1,2502)=10.703, p=.001. h Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.012, F(1,2502)=1.179, p=.278. *p<.05. **p<.01.			

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to test whether the viewing length of American TV series significantly predicted the participants' perceptions of Chinese values. The results of the regressions indicated that the viewing length explained 0.4 percent of the variances ( $R^2 = .024$ ,  $F(6, 2502) = 10.084$ ,  $p < .001$ ). It was found that viewing length did significantly predict perception of the overall Chinese value ( $\beta = -.064$ ,  $p = .002$ ). Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (Viewing length, Tolerance = .92, VIF = 1.08).

Demographic variables do predict respondents' perceptions of Chinese values. Age was a significant individual predictor of values such as non-competitiveness and respect for tradition, with older participants favouring non-competitiveness and tradition more than younger participants. However,

age also predicts family orientation, with older audience favouring family orientation less than younger audience. Gender is a predictor of values such as sexual conservatism, with women favouring sexual conservatism more than men. However, gender also predicts relationship by status, non-competitiveness, respect for tradition, and thrift, with men favouring status, non-competitiveness, tradition, and thrift more than women. Education is a predictor of sexual conservatism, prudence, family orientation, and thrift; people with higher educational levels favour these values more than less educated people. Wealth was a predictor of family orientation; people with higher incomes favour family more than people with lower incomes. This means even viewers who have higher education levels and living standards still hold Chinese values to some extent. Visiting to America is a predictor of values such as relationship by status, sexual conservatism, prudence, family orientation, respect for tradition, and thrift, which means that people who have not been to the US favour status, sexual conservatism, prudence, family, respect for tradition, and thrift more than people who have been to America. Moreover, education, wealth, and travelling to America, are predictors of the overall Chinese value, with people having higher levels of education tending to be more supportive of the overall Chinese value than people who have lower levels of education; people who have higher incomes tend to hold overall Chinese value more than people have lower income; people who have not been to America tend to be more supportive of overall Chinese value than people who have been to America.

After controlling for the effect of demographic variables, the length of viewing American TV series significantly predicted sexual conservatism, relationship by status, respect for tradition, and non-competitiveness, with long-term viewers of American TV series less favorable towards these Chinese values than short-term viewers. Also, the length of viewing American TV series significantly predicted family orientation, which means that long-term viewers of American TV series are more supportive of family orientation than short-term viewers of American TV series, but length of viewing American TV series failed to significantly predict other Chinese values. However, the length of viewing American TV series did predict the overall Chinese value, with long-term viewers tending to be less supportive of the Chinese overall value than short-term viewers. The findings support hypothesis 3.3 that long-term viewers are less likely to hold Chinese values than short-term viewers.

#### **6.2.4.3 Length of exposure and perception of American values**

To test hypothesis 3.3 (about perceptions of American values and the length of exposure to American series), hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted. Regressions were performed for



the total sample (N=2,509), males (n=759), and females (n=1,750) on each of the seven criterion measures of American values (i.e., individual orientation, modernity, sexual liberation, adventurousness, equality, leisure, and competition). To answer this research question, demographic variables were entered in the first stage, followed by the separate length of American viewing measure, predicting each criterion variable. The results of the analyses involving all the respondents are presented in Table 6.12.

**Table 6.12 Relationship between length of exposure to American TV series and perceptions of American values for total sample (n=2,509), by value**

	<u>Overall American value<sup>a</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.053 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.101 <sup>**</sup>	.011
Gender		.042	.002
Education		.111 <sup>**</sup>	.011
Wealth		.125 <sup>**</sup>	.015
Visited US or not		.020	.000
<b>2.Viewing length of American TV series</b>	.019 <sup>**</sup>	.143 <sup>**</sup>	.019
	<u>Competition<sup>c</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.016 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.056 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Gender		-.036	.001
Education		.071 <sup>**</sup>	.005
Wealth		.078 <sup>**</sup>	.006
Visited US or not		-.013	.000
<b>2.Viewing length of American TV series</b>	.002 <sup>*</sup>	.046 <sup>**</sup>	.002
	<u>Individulism<sup>c</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.054 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.070 <sup>**</sup>	.004
Gender		.060 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Education		.113 <sup>**</sup>	.012
Wealth		.113 <sup>**</sup>	.012
Visited US or not		.081 <sup>**</sup>	.006
<b>2.Viewing length of American TV series</b>	.013 <sup>**</sup>	.120 <sup>**</sup>	.013
	<u>Equality<sup>g</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.010 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.045 <sup>*</sup>	.002

	<u>Sexual Liberation<sup>b</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.061 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.102 <sup>**</sup>	.010
Gender		.172 <sup>**</sup>	.029
Education		.005	.000
Wealth		.103 <sup>**</sup>	.010
Visited US or not		-.014	.000
<b>2.Viewing length of American TV series</b>	.017 <sup>**</sup>	.136 <sup>**</sup>	.017
	<u>Modernity<sup>d</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.030 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.069 <sup>**</sup>	.004
Gender		-.017	.000
Education		.124 <sup>**</sup>	.014
Wealth		.077 <sup>**</sup>	.006
Visited US or not		.018	.000
<b>2.Viewing length of American TV series</b>	.005 <sup>**</sup>	.076 <sup>**</sup>	.005
	<u>Leisure<sup>f</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.015 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.066 <sup>**</sup>	.004
Gender		.028	.001
Education		.079 <sup>**</sup>	.006
Wealth		.012	.000
Visited US or not		.023	.000
<b>2.Viewing length of American TV series</b>	.006 <sup>**</sup>	.082 <sup>**</sup>	.006
	<u>Adventurousness<sup>h</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.010 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.045 <sup>*</sup>	.002

<b>Gender</b>		-.020	.000
<b>Education</b>		.043**	.002
<b>Wealth</b>		.076**	.006
<b>Visited US or not</b>		.005	.000
<b>2.Viewing length of American TV series</b>	.000	.016	.000
a Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.072, F(1, 2502)=51.102, p=.000. b Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.078, F(1, 2502)=45.962, p=.000. c Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.017, F(1, 2502)=4.966, p=.026. d Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.035, F(1, 2502)=13.678, p=.000. e Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.067, F(1, 2502)=35.677, p=.000.			

<b>Gender</b>		-.051*	.003
<b>Education</b>		.039	.001
<b>Wealth</b>		.054**	.003
<b>Visited US or not</b>		-.016	.000
<b>2.Viewing length of American TV series</b>	.010**	.108**	.010
f Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.021, F(1, 2502)=15.824, p=.000. g Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.010, F(1, 2502)=.571, p=.450. h Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.020, F(1, 2502)=24.991, p=.000. * p<.05. ** p<.01.			

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to test if the viewing length of American TV series significantly predicted participants' perceptions of American values. The results of the regressions indicated that the viewing length explained 1.9 percent of the variances ( $R^2 = .072$ ,  $F(6, 2502) = 32.186$ ,  $p < .001$ ); it was found that viewing length did significantly predicted overall American value ( $\beta = .143$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (Viewing length, Tolerance = .92, VIF = 1.08).

The set of demographic variables did predict significant variables in the respondents' perceptions of American values. Age was a significant predictor of values such as sexual liberation, competition, modernity, individualism, leisure, equality, and adventurousness, with younger people favouring these values more than older people. Gender is a predictor of values such as sexual liberation and individualism, with women favouring sexual liberation and individualism more than men. However, gender also predicts adventurousness, with men favouring adventurousness more than women. Education is a predictor of competition, individualism, modernity, leisure, equality, and adventurousness; people with higher levels of education favour competition, individualism, modernity, leisure, equality, and adventurousness more than less educated people. Wealth was a predictor of sexual liberation, competition, modernity, individualism, equality, and adventurousness; people with higher incomes favour these values more than people with lower incomes. This also supports the idea that Chinese viewers of American TV series, who, with higher levels of education and income, favour American values. Besides, visiting America is a predictor of values such as individualism, which means that people who have not been to the US are more supportive of individualism than people who have been to America. Moreover, age, education, and wealth are predictors of the overall American value, with younger people favouring the overall American value more than older people; people with higher levels of education tend to be more supportive of the overall American value than people who have lower levels of education; and people who have higher

incomes tend to be more supportive of the overall American value than people who have lower incomes.

After controlling for the effect of demographic variables, the length of exposure to American TV series significantly predicted sexual liberation, competition, modernity, individualism, leisure, and adventurousness, which means that long-term viewers of American TV series are more supportive of sexual liberation, competition, modernity, individualism, leisure, and adventurousness, than short-term viewers; but the length of exposure to American TV series failed to significantly predict equality. Moreover, the length of exposure to American TV series did predict the overall American value, which means long-term viewers tend to be more supportive of the overall American value than short-term viewers. The findings support hypothesis 3.3 that long-term viewers are more likely to favour American values than short-term viewers.

### **6.2.5 Gratifications and value endorsement**

**RQ4: How do Chinese viewers seeking different gratifications from viewing American TV series differ in their perceptions of cultural values?**

*Hypothesis 4.1: Viewers seeking one type of gratification (learning/entertainment/sociability/escape) are less likely to hold Chinese values and more likely to favour American values than viewers who seek other types of gratifications (learning/entertainment/sociability/escape).*

#### **6.2.5.1 Types of gratifications and perceptions of American reality**

As stated in the literature, Chinese audiences viewing American TV series are believed to seek four gratifications: entertainment, learning, sociability, and escape (Jiang & Leung, 2012). Gratifications are also crucial factors that could influence the impacts of viewing American TV series on audiences, as people with different gratifications could believe that what they see on television is real to different extents (Nabi et al., 2006; Papacharissi & Mendelson, 2007). This perception of reality could further influence their value cognitions (Shrum et al., 2005). To test the relationship between gratifications and value endorsements, the viewers' perceptions of reality should be evaluated first. The result of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis on gratifications' prediction on the perception of American reality is shown on Table 6.13.

**Table 6.13 Relationship between gratifications and viewers' perceptions of American reality for total sample (n=2,509)**

	Perceptions of American reality		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.121 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.028	.001
Gender		-.027	.001
Education		.031	.001
Wealth		.291 <sup>**</sup>	.080
Visited US or not		.031	.001
<b>2. Viewership</b>	.013 <sup>**</sup>		
Exposure time		.049 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Exposure length		.057 <sup>**</sup>	.002
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.046 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.113 <sup>**</sup>	.010
Sociability		-.072 <sup>**</sup>	.004
Learning		.189 <sup>**</sup>	.028
Escape		.004	.000

Overall R<sup>2</sup>=.180, F(4, 2497)=35.336, p=.000.

\*p<.05. \*\*p<.01.

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to test whether the participants' gratifications significantly predicted the participants' perceptions of American values. The results of the regression indicated that the gratifications explained 4.6 percent of the variances (R<sup>2</sup>= .180, F (11, 2497) =49.948, p<.001). It was found that gratifications significantly predicted American reality (entertainment,  $\beta$ = .113, p<.001; sociability,  $\beta$ = -.072, p<.001; learning,  $\beta$ = .189, p<.001; and escape,  $\beta$ = .004, p= .845). Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (entertainment, Tolerance = .89, VIF = 1.12; sociability, Tolerance = .97, VIF = 1.03; learning, Tolerance = .95, VIF = 1.05; escape, Tolerance = .99, VIF = 1.02).

After adding gratifications into the analysis, the set of demographic variables still predicted significant variables in the respondents' perceptions of American reality. Wealth is a predictor of American reality, which means that people with higher incomes tend to think what they see on American television is more real than people with lower incomes. Exposure time and length are predictors of perceptions of American reality, with heavy viewers tending to think what they see on American television is more real than light viewers; long-term viewers tend to think what they see on American television is more real than short-term viewers.

After controlling for the effects of demographic variables, the set of gratifications significantly predicted the participants' perceptions of American reality. Entertainment and learning significantly predict the perceptions of American reality, which means the more people seek entertainment and learning by viewing American TV series, the more they believe what they see on television is real. Sociability did predict the perception of American reality, with the people seeking more sociability through viewing American TV series being less likely to believe that what they see on television is true. In other words, audiences viewing American TV series while seeking learning and entertainment gratifications take what they see more seriously than people who watch American TV series for sociability. However, escape failed to predict viewers' perceptions of American reality.

Table 6.14 shows that Chinese people who watch American TV series (N=2509) desire more gratification through entertainment  $M=3.74$  ( $SD=.740$ ) and learning  $M=3.78$  ( $SD=.777$ ) than sociability  $M=3.61$  ( $SD=.779$ ) and escape  $M=2.94$  ( $SD=.836$ ).

**Table 6.14 Mean scores of types of gratifications sought from viewing American TV series for total sample (n=2,509)**

Gratifications	M	SD
Entertainment	3.74	.740
Sociability	3.61	.779
Learning	3.78	.777
Escape	2.94	.836

#### **6.2.5.2 Types of gratifications and perceptions of Chinese values**

To test hypothesis 4.1 (about value perceptions and the gratifications sought from viewing American TV series), hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed. Regressions were performed for the total sample of American TV series viewers (N=2,509), males (n=759), and females (n=1,750) on each of the seven criterion measures of Chinese values (i.e., family orientation, respect for tradition, sexual conservatism, prudent, relationship by status, thrift, and non-competitiveness). To answer this research question, demographic variables were entered in the first stage, followed by separate total viewing time and length of American series measures, and then gratification measures

were included, predicting each criterion's variable. The results of the analyses involving all the respondents are presented in Table 6.15.

**Table 6.15 Relationships between gratifications of viewing American TV series and perceptions of Chinese values for total sample (n=2,509), by value**

	<u>Overall Chinese value<sup>a</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.020 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		.032	.001
Gender		-.058 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Education		.033	.001
Wealth		.026	.001
Visited US or not		.084 <sup>**</sup>	.007
<b>2.Viewership</b>	.004 <sup>**</sup>		
Viewing time		-.038 <sup>*</sup>	.001
Viewing length		-.076 <sup>**</sup>	.005
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.149 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.129 <sup>**</sup>	.013
Sociability		.163 <sup>**</sup>	.021
Learning		.130 <sup>**</sup>	.013
Escape		.173 <sup>**</sup>	.026
	<u>Relationship by status<sup>c</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.009 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		.024	.023
Gender		-.079 <sup>**</sup>	.076
Education		.013	.012
Wealth		.023	.022
Visited US or not		.050 <sup>*</sup>	.049
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.003 <sup>*</sup>		
Viewing time		-.019	.018
Viewing length		-.059 <sup>**</sup>	.054
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.052 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.036	.032
Sociability		.085 <sup>**</sup>	.076
Learning		.075 <sup>**</sup>	.066
Escape		.140 <sup>**</sup>	.131
	<u>Family orientation<sup>e</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.038 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.025	.001
Gender		-.007	.000
Education		.050 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Wealth		.049 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Visited US or not		.061 <sup>**</sup>	.004
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.005 <sup>**</sup>		
Viewing time		-.048 <sup>*</sup>	.002

	<u>Sexual conservatism<sup>b</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.016 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.019	.000
Gender		.078 <sup>**</sup>	.006
Education		.018	.000
Wealth		.021	.000
Visited US or not		.051 <sup>*</sup>	.003
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.016 <sup>**</sup>		
Viewing time		-.022	.000
Viewing length		-.132 <sup>**</sup>	.014
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.031 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.032	.001
Sociability		.112 <sup>**</sup>	.010
Learning		.063 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Escape		.053	.003
	<u>Prudence<sup>d</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.015 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		.013	.000
Gender		-.036	.001
Education		.018	.000
Wealth		-.013	.000
Visited US or not		.063 <sup>**</sup>	.004
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.001		
Viewing time		-.047 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Viewing length		-.002	.000
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.104 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.016 <sup>**</sup>	.036
Sociability		.094 <sup>**</sup>	.007
Learning		.103 <sup>**</sup>	.008
Escape		.071 <sup>**</sup>	.004
	<u>Non-competitiveness<sup>f</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.014 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		.076 <sup>**</sup>	.005
Gender		-.062 <sup>**</sup>	.004
Education		-.002	.000
Wealth		-.003	.000
Visited US or not		.031	.001
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.003 <sup>*</sup>		
Viewing time		.012	.000

<b>Viewing length</b>		.047**	.002
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.098**		
<b>Entertainment</b>		.185**	.027
<b>Sociability</b>		.085**	.006
<b>Learning</b>		.178**	.025
<b>Escape</b>		-.018	.000
	<u>Respect for tradition<sup>g</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.008**		
<b>Age</b>		.056**	.003
<b>Gender</b>		-.062**	.004
<b>Education</b>		.012	.000
<b>Wealth</b>		.032	.001
<b>Visited US or not</b>		.031	.000
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.004**		
<b>Viewing time</b>		-.005	.000
<b>Viewing length</b>		-.069**	.004
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.054**		
<b>Entertainment</b>		.015	.000
<b>Sociability</b>		.125**	.012
<b>Learning</b>		.055**	.002
<b>Escape</b>		.137**	.016
a Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.173, F(4, 2497)= 112.546, p=.000. b Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.064, F(4,2497)=20.975, p=.000. c Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.064, F(4,2497)=34.558, p=.000. d Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.120, F(4,2497)=73.554, p=.000. e Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.141, F(4,2497)=70.881, p=.000.			

<b>Viewing length</b>		-.047**	.002
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.066**		
<b>Entertainment</b>		-.008	.000
<b>Sociability</b>		.037	.001
<b>Learning</b>		-.009	.000
<b>Escape</b>		.253**	.056
	<u>Thrift<sup>h</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.011**		
<b>Age</b>		-.001	.000
<b>Gender</b>		-.075**	.005
<b>Education</b>		.030	.001
<b>Wealth</b>		.000	.000
<b>Visited US or not</b>		.056**	.003
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.001		
<b>Viewing time</b>		-.030	.001
<b>Viewing length</b>		-.026	.001
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.046**		
<b>Entertainment</b>		.075**	.004
<b>Sociability</b>		.120**	.011
<b>Learning</b>		.082**	.005
<b>Escape</b>		.043*	.002
f Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.083, F(4,2497)=44.853, p=.000. g Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.066, F(4,2497)=35.977, p=.000. h Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.058, F(4,2497)=30.818, p=.000. *p<.05. **p<.01.			

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to test whether the participants' gratifications significantly predicted the participants' perceptions of Chinese values after controlling for demographical and viewership variables. The results of the regressions indicate that the gratifications explain 14.9 percent of the variances ( $R^2 = .173$ ,  $F(11, 2497) = 47.415$ ,  $p < .001$ ); it was found that gratifications did significantly predict the participants' perceptions of the overall Chinese value (entertainment,  $\beta = .129$ ,  $p < .001$ ; sociability,  $\beta = .163$ ,  $p < .001$ ; learning,  $\beta = .130$ ,  $p < .001$ ; and escape,  $\beta = .173$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (entertainment, Tolerance = .89, VIF = 1.12; sociability, Tolerance = .97, VIF = 1.03; learning, Tolerance = .95, VIF = 1.05; escape, Tolerance = .99, VIF = 1.02).

After including gratifications in the analyses, the set of demographic variables predicted statistically significant variables in the respondents' perceptions of Chinese values. Age was a significant predictor of values such as non-competitiveness and respect for tradition, with older people favouring non-competitiveness and tradition more than younger people. Gender predicts values such

as sexual conservatism, with women favouring sexual conservatism more than men. However, gender also predicts relationship by status, non-competitiveness, respect for tradition, and thrift, with men favouring these values more than women. Education level predicts family orientation, with people with higher educational levels favouring family more than less educated people. Visiting America predicts values such as relationship by status, sexual conservatism, prudence, family orientation, and thrift, which means that people who have not been to the US favour sexual conservatism, prudence, family orientation, and thrift more than people who have been to America. Moreover, gender and visiting America or not, predict the overall Chinese value, with males tending to be more supportive of the overall Chinese value than females; and people who have not been to America tend to be more supportive of the overall Chinese value than people who have been to America.

The results between viewership and Chinese value endorsement change after gratifications are considered. Controlling for the effect of demographic variables, the total time of viewing American TV series significantly predicted prudence and family orientation, as heavy viewers are less favourable towards family orientation and prudence than light viewers; but the total time of viewing American TV series failed to significantly predict other Chinese values. Moreover, the viewing length significantly predicted relationship by status, sexual conservatism, non-competitiveness, and respect for tradition, with long-term viewers less favourable towards these Chinese values than short-term viewers. The viewing length also significantly predicted family orientation, with long-term viewers tending to be more supportive of family orientation than short-term viewers. Above all, both viewing measures, which include total viewing time and length, did predict the overall Chinese value, with heavy viewers being less supportive of the overall Chinese value than light viewers, and long-term viewers less supportive of the overall Chinese value than short-term viewers.

After controlling for the effects of demographic variables and the total time and length of viewing American series, the set of gratifications significantly predicted Chinese values. Entertainment predicts prudence, family orientation, and thrift, which means that people who watch American TV series for entertainment are more favourable regarding prudence, family, and thrift than people who are less interested in seeking entertainment. Learning predicts relationship by status, family orientation, prudence, sexual conservatism, thrift, and respect for tradition, with people who mainly watch American TV series for learning favouring these values more than people who are less interested in learning. Sociability predicts sexual conservatism, family orientation, relationship by status, prudence, thrift, and respect for tradition, which means that people who watch American TV



series for sociability favour these values more than people who are less interested in sociability. Escape predicts non-competitiveness, respect for tradition, thrift, relationship by status, and prudence, with people who watch American TV series mainly to escape favouring these values more than people who are less interested in seeking to escape. However, results from people who watch to escape ( $\beta = .173$ ) and for sociability ( $\beta = .163$ ) did have a larger prediction power regarding the overall Chinese value than entertainment ( $\beta = .129$ ) and learning ( $\beta = .130$ ), which means that Chinese people who watch American TV series for escape and sociability are more likely to hold Chinese values than people who seek entertainment and learning. The findings support hypothesis 4.1 that viewers seeking learning and entertainment are less likely to hold Chinese values than viewers seeking sociability and escape.

### 6.2.5.3 Types of gratifications and perceptions of American values

To test hypothesis 4.1 (about American value perceptions and the gratifications sought from viewing American TV series), hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted. Regressions were performed on the total sample of Chinese viewers of American TV series ( $N=2,509$ ), males ( $n=759$ ), and females ( $n=1,750$ ) on each of the seven criterion measures of American values (i.e., individual orientation, modernity, sexual liberation, adventurousness, equality, leisure, and competition). To answer this research question, demographic variables were entered in the first stage, followed by separate total time and length of American viewing measures, and then gratification measures, predicting each criterion variable. The results of analysis involving all respondents are presented in Table 6.16.

**Table 6.16 Relationships between the gratifications of viewing American TV series and perceptions of American values for total sample ( $n=2,509$ ), by value**

	Overall American value <sup>a</sup>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.053**		
Age		-.061**	.003
Gender		.002	.000
Education		.039*	.001
Wealth		.058**	.003
Visited US or not		-.017	.000
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.021**		
Viewing time		.015	.000
Viewing length		.087**	.006
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.216**		
Entertainment		.282**	.062
Sociability		.118**	.011

	Sexual Liberation <sup>b</sup>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.061**		
Age		-.081**	.006
Gender		.167**	.026
Education		-.020	.000
Wealth		.077**	.006
Visited US or not		-.028	.001
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.018**		
Viewing time		.021	.000
Viewing length		.105**	.009
<b>3.Gratifications</b>	.031**		
Entertainment		.159**	.020
Sociability		.021	.000

<b>Learning Escape</b>		.210 <sup>**</sup> .086 <sup>**</sup>	.034 .007
	<u>Competition<sup>c</sup></u> R <sup>2</sup> change      β      sr <sup>2</sup>		
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.016 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.030	.001
Gender		-.065 <sup>**</sup>	.004
Education		.030	.001
Wealth		.042	.002
Visited US or not		-.034	.001
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.002		
Viewing time		-.009	.000
Viewing length		.025	.001
<b>3.Gratisfactions</b>	.071 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.118 <sup>**</sup>	.011
Sociability		.094 <sup>**</sup>	.007
Learning		.153 <sup>**</sup>	.018
Escape		.026	.001
	<u>Individulism<sup>e</sup></u> R <sup>2</sup> change      β      sr <sup>2</sup>		
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.054 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.018	.000
Gender		.020	.000
Education		.046 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Wealth		.041 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Visited US or not		.046 <sup>*</sup>	.002
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.014 <sup>**</sup>		
Viewing time		-.011	.000
Viewing length		.069 <sup>**</sup>	.004
<b>3.Gratisfactions</b>	.163 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.312 <sup>**</sup>	.076
Sociability		.079 <sup>**</sup>	.005
Learning		.172 <sup>**</sup>	.023
Escape		-.021	.000
	<u>Equality<sup>g</sup></u> R <sup>2</sup> change      β      sr <sup>2</sup>		
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.010 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.031	.001
Gender		-.041 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Education		.012	.000
Wealth		.055 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Visited US or not		-.008	.000
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.000		
Viewing time		-.020	.036
Viewing length		.006	.000
<b>3.Gratisfactions</b>	.055 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.059 <sup>*</sup>	.003
Sociability		.068 <sup>**</sup>	.004
Learning		.146 <sup>**</sup>	.017
Escape		.074 <sup>**</sup>	.005
a Overall R <sup>2</sup> = .290, F(4, 2497)=189.623, p=.000. b Overall R <sup>2</sup> = .110, F(4,2497)=21.731, p=.000. c Overall R <sup>2</sup> = .089, F(4,2497)=48.624, p=.000.			

<b>Learning Escape</b>		.010 .050 <sup>*</sup>	.000 .002
	<u>Modernity<sup>d</sup></u> R <sup>2</sup> change      β      sr <sup>2</sup>		
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.030 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.032	.001
Gender		-.045 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Education		.075 <sup>**</sup>	.005
Wealth		.031	.001
Visited US or not		-.008	.000
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.011 <sup>**</sup>		
Viewing time		.053 <sup>**</sup>	.003
Viewing length		.029	.001
<b>3.Gratisfactions</b>	.101 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.171 <sup>**</sup>	.023
Sociability		.110 <sup>**</sup>	.010
Learning		.148 <sup>**</sup>	.017
Escape		.045 <sup>*</sup>	.002
	<u>Leisure<sup>f</sup></u> R <sup>2</sup> change      β      sr <sup>2</sup>		
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.015 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.029	.001
Gender		.006	.000
Education		.029	.001
Wealth		-.035 <sup>*</sup>	.001
Visited US or not		-.004	.000
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.007 <sup>**</sup>		
Viewing time		.010	.010
Viewing length		.040	.001
<b>3.Gratisfactions</b>	.107 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.234 <sup>**</sup>	.043
Sociability		.080 <sup>**</sup>	.005
Learning		.097 <sup>**</sup>	.007
Escape		.075 <sup>**</sup>	.005
	<u>Adventurousness<sup>h</sup></u> R <sup>2</sup> change      β      sr <sup>2</sup>		
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.010 <sup>**</sup>		
Age		-.024	.000
Gender		-.072 <sup>**</sup>	.005
Education		.001	.000
Wealth		.024	.001
Visited US or not		-.034	.001
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.011 <sup>**</sup>		
Viewing time		.017	.026
Viewing length		.072 <sup>**</sup>	.004
<b>3.Gratisfactions</b>	.083 <sup>**</sup>		
Entertainment		.110 <sup>**</sup>	.009
Sociability		.051 <sup>*</sup>	.002
Learning		.168 <sup>**</sup>	.022
Escape		.104 <sup>**</sup>	.010
f Overall R <sup>2</sup> = .129, F(4, 2497)=76.396, p=.000. g Overall R <sup>2</sup> = .065, F(4, 2497)=36.661, p=.000. h Overall R <sup>2</sup> = .104, F(4, 2497)=57.747, p=.000.			

d Overall  $R^2=.141$ ,  $F(4, 2497)=73.355$ ,  $p=.000$ .  
e Overall  $R^2=.231$ ,  $F(4, 2497)=132.674$ ,  $p=.000$ .

\* $p<.05$ . \*\* $p<.01$ .

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to test whether the participants' gratifications significantly predicted the participants' perceptions of American values when demographical and viewership variables were controlled. The results of the regressions indicated that the gratifications explained 21.6 percent of the variances ( $R^2=.290$ ,  $F(11, 2497)=92.621$ ,  $p<.001$ ). It was found that gratifications significantly predicted the participants' perceptions of overall American value (entertainment,  $\beta=.282$ ,  $p<.001$ ; sociability,  $\beta=.118$ ,  $p<.001$ ; learning,  $\beta=.210$ ,  $p<.001$ ; and escape,  $\beta=.086$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (entertainment, Tolerance = .89, VIF = 1.12; sociability, Tolerance = .97, VIF = 1.03; learning, Tolerance = .95, VIF = 1.05; escape, Tolerance = .99, VIF = 1.02).

After including gratifications in the analyses, the set of demographic variables still predicted significant variables in the respondents' favouring of American values. Age was a significant predictor of sexual liberation, with younger people favouring sexual liberation more than older people. Gender is a predictor of values such as competition, modernity, equality, and adventurousness, with men favouring these values more than women. However, gender also predicts sexual liberation, with women favouring sexual liberation more than men. Education is a predictor of modernity and individualism, with people having higher educational levels favouring modernity and individualism more than people with lower educational levels. Wealth was a predictor of sexual liberation, individualism and equality, with people possessing higher incomes favouring sexual liberation, individualism and equality more than people with lower incomes. But wealth also predicts leisure, with people with higher incomes favouring leisure less than people with lower incomes. Visiting America is a predictor of individualism, which means that people who have not visited the US are more supportive of individualism more than people who have been to America. Moreover, age, education, and wealth are predictors of the overall American value, with younger people favouring the overall American value more than older people; people who have a higher education favouring the overall American value more than people who have a lower level of education; and people who have a higher income favouring overall American value more than people who have a lower level of income.

Controlling for the effect of demographic variables, the total time of viewing American TV series only significantly predicted modernity, with heavy viewers favouring modernity more than light

viewers, but failed to predict other American values. Moreover, the set of viewing length predicted sexual liberation, individual orientation, and adventurousness, which means that long-term viewers of American TV series favoured these values more than short-term viewers. Above all, the viewing length did predict the overall American value, with long-term viewers more supportive of the overall American value than short-term viewers.

After controlling for the effects of demographic variables and viewership, the set of gratifications significantly predicted the audience's perceptions of American values. Entertainment predicts sexual liberation, competition, modernity, individualism, leisure, equality, and adventurousness, which means that people who watch American TV series for entertainment are more favouring of these American values more than people who are less interested in seeking entertainment. Learning predicts competition, modernity, individualism, leisure, equality, and adventurousness, with people who watch American TV series for learning favouring competition, modernity, individualism, leisure, equality, and adventurousness more than people who are less interested in learning. Sociability predicts competition, modernity, individualism, leisure, equality, and adventurousness, with people who watch American TV series for sociability favouring these values more than people less interested in seeking sociability. Escape predicts modernity, sexual liberation, leisure, equality, and adventurousness, with people who watch American TV series to escape favouring these values more than people who are less interested in seeking escape. Above all, although each gratification did significantly predict the overall American value, entertainment ( $\beta = .282$ ) and learning ( $\beta = .210$ ) have stronger prediction powers than sociability ( $\beta = .118$ ) and escape ( $\beta = .086$ ). The findings support hypothesis 4.1 that viewers seeking learning and entertainment are more likely to favour American values than viewers who seeking sociability and escape.

### **6.2.6 Viewership and perceptions of realities**

*Hypothesis 3.4:* Heavy viewers/ long-term viewers are more likely to believe what they saw on American TV series are real and less likely satisfied with Chinese reality than light viewers/ short-term viewers do.

The survey findings did indicate that viewership is a predictor of cultural values and realities. The relationship between viewing American TV series and Chinese audiences' perceptions of American reality was discussed in section 6.2.3.1 and section 6.2.4.1. The more American TV series that Chinese audiences watch, the more they will accept televised American reality and values. These findings support the hypothesis 3.4 that Chinese heavy viewers of American TV series/ long-term

viewers of American TV series are more likely to believe what they saw on American TV series are real compare to light viewers and short-term viewers do. However, the adjustment of cultural values cannot be separated from the reality and original culture embedded in the audience. The cultural changes caused by globalization are happening in countries where the local culture is being altered by global culture; the inhabitants, it is assumed, feel less connection with their own culture, so they adopt global culture as their new culture (Berry, 1997). Previous studies have found evidence that watching American television has impacts on audiences' perceptions of their own reality (Carlson, 1993; Oliver et al., 2008). This study found signs of change in Chinese audiences' cultural values by watching American TV series, but whether this impact could go deeper to weaken the connection between Chinese audiences and their perceptions of Chinese reality is less clear. To reveal the relationship between viewership and perceptions of Chinese reality, we need to compare differences in satisfaction with Chinese reality between the viewers and non-viewers of American TV series.

**Table 6.17 Mean values of viewers' satisfaction regarding the Chinese reality**

	Watch American series or not	N	Mean	SD
Satisfied with economy	Yes	2509	3.43	0.827
	No	506	3.33	0.905
Satisfied with society	Yes	2509	3.37	0.793
	No	506	3.27	0.862
Satisfied with culture	Yes	2509	3.29	0.870
	No	506	3.22	0.920
Proud of being a Chinese	Yes	2509	3.83	0.866
	No	506	3.79	0.962

The mean scores of Chinese viewers of American TV series versus non-viewers are shown in Table 6.17. People who do watch American TV series (N=2,509) are more satisfied with aspects of the Chinese reality such as the economy M=3.43 (SD= .827), society M=3.37 (SD= .793), culture M=3.29 (SD= .870), and being a Chinese person M=3.83 (SD= .866), compared to people who do not watch American TV series (N=506) concerning their level of satisfaction regarding the economy M=3.33 (SD= .905), society M=3.27 (SD= .862), culture M=3.22 (SD= .920), and being a Chinese person M=3.79 (SD= .962). This shows that the Chinese audience who watch American TV series are more satisfied with the Chinese reality than non-viewers. Moreover, the mean value of satisfaction regarding the Chinese culture was lower compared to other variables.

To test whether the people who watch American TV series and people who do not were associated with statistically significant differences in their satisfaction regarding the Chinese reality, an independent samples t-test was performed. The distributions of people who watch American TV series and those who do not were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test, i.e., skew  $< |2.0|$  and kurtosis  $< |9.0|$  (Schmider et al., 2010). Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test. The independent samples t-test was associated with a statistically significant effect regarding satisfaction with the Chinese economy  $t(685.335) = 2.382, p=.017$  and satisfaction with society  $t(3013) = 2.496, p=.013$ . However, there was no significant effect regarding satisfaction with culture  $t(3013) = 1.691, p=.091$  and being a Chinese person  $t(679.936) = .947, p=.344$ . Thus, the Chinese people who watch American TV series were statistically significantly more satisfied with the Chinese economy and society than Chinese people who do not watch American TV series, but there was no statistically significant difference regarding satisfaction with Chinese culture and with being a Chinese person. Cohen's d was estimated at .12 for satisfaction with the economy, and .12 for satisfaction with society, which is a small or moderate effect based on Cohen (1992)'s guidelines.

To study the relationship between viewership and perceptions of Chinese reality, hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted. Regressions were performed for the total sample of American TV series viewer ( $N=2,509$ ), males ( $n=759$ ), and females ( $n=1,750$ ) on each of satisfaction criterion of Chinese reality (i.e., economy, society, culture, proud of being a Chinese person). To answer this research question, demographic variables were entered in the first stage, followed by separate total time and length of viewing measures. The results of the analyses involving all the respondents are presented in Table 6.18.

**Table 6.18 Relationships between viewing American TV series and being satisfied with Chinese reality for total sample ( $n=2,509$ )**

	<u>Economy<sup>a</sup></u>				<u>Society<sup>b</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>		R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.070**			<b>1.Demographics</b>	.048**		
Age		-.030	.001	Age		-.049*	.002
Gender		-.036	.001	Gender		-.031	.001
Education		.070**	.004	Education		.085**	.007
Wealth		.231**	.052	Wealth		.173**	.029
Visited US or not		.090**	.008	Visited US or not		.092**	.008
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.002			<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.001		
Viewing time		.015	.000	Viewing time		.030	.001

Viewing length		.037	.001
	<u>Culture<sup>c</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.025**		
Age		.001	.000
Gender		-.019	.000
Education		.047*	.002
Wealth		.140**	.019
Visited US or not		.073**	.005
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.004*		
Viewing time		.031	.001
Viewing length		-.063**	.003
a Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.072, F(2, 2501)=2.430, p=.088. b Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.049, F(2, 2501)=1.058, p=.347.			

Viewing length		-.011	.000
	<u>Being a Chinese<sup>d</sup></u>		
	R <sup>2</sup> change	$\beta$	sr <sup>2</sup>
<b>1.Demographics</b>	.059**		
Age		-.070**	.000
Gender		.038	.005
Education		.103**	.000
Wealth		.151**	.001
Visited US or not		.125**	.001
<b>2.Total Viewing</b>	.000		
Viewing time		-.014	.026
Viewing length		.009	.004
c Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.028, F(2, 2501)=4.540, p=.011. d Overall R <sup>2</sup> =.059, F(2, 2501)=.265, p=.768. *p<.05. **p<.01.			

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed to test whether viewing American TV series significantly predicted participants' perceptions of Chinese reality. The results of the regression analyses indicate that viewing American TV series explained 0.4 percent of the variances ( $R^2 = .028$ ,  $F(7, 2501) = 10.420$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Regarding the predicted satisfaction with Chinese culture, it was found that the viewing length did significantly predict the viewers' level of satisfaction regarding Chinese culture ( $\beta = -.063$ ,  $p = .003$ ). Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (total viewing time, Tolerance = .99, VIF = 1.01; viewing length, Tolerance = .92, VIF = 1.08).

The set of demographic variables did predict significant variables in respondents' satisfactions with Chinese reality. Age predicted the viewers' satisfaction with society and with being a Chinese person, with younger people being more satisfied with Chinese society and being a Chinese person compared to older people. Gender did not predict significant variables regarding satisfaction with Chinese reality, with no significant differences between women and men regarding these variables. Education did predict satisfaction with the economy, society, culture, and being a Chinese person, with people who have higher levels of education being more satisfied with the economy, society, culture, and being a Chinese person compared with people with lower levels of education. Wealth predicted satisfaction with the economy, society, culture, and being a Chinese person, as people with higher incomes were more satisfied with the Chinese reality compared with people with lower incomes. The category of Chinese viewers of American TV series who have visited America also predicted satisfaction regarding the Chinese economy, society, culture, and being a Chinese person, with Chinese people who have not visited the US are more satisfied with Chinese reality more than people who have visited America.

Controlling for the effect of demographic variables, the total time of viewing American TV series did not significantly predict satisfaction with Chinese reality, as there are no significant difference in satisfaction with the Chinese reality between Chinese heavy viewers and Chinese light viewers. However, viewing length did predict satisfaction regarding culture, with long-term viewers less satisfied with Chinese culture than short-term viewers.

Above all, there is no strong evidence to show that American TV series could weaken the tie between Chinese audiences and their perception of Chinese reality. The findings rejected hypothesis 3.4 that Chinese heavy viewers of American TV series/ long-term viewers of American TV series are less likely to satisfy with Chinese reality than light viewers/ short-term viewers do, in favor of the alternative hypothesis that heavy viewers/ long-term viewers are not less likely to satisfy with Chinese reality than light viewers/ short-term viewers do. Chinese audience who watch American TV series tend to be more satisfied with the economy and society of China than audience who do not watch American TV series. Although they are more satisfied with the Chinese economy and society, it may be because they are wealthier (among other factors), and may not indicate that viewing American TV series was the only factor that impacted their satisfaction as the independent samples t-test unable to control the effect of demographic variables. For Chinese audience of American TV series, it turns out that long-term viewers tend to be less satisfied with Chinese culture than short-term viewers, but there are no differences between long-term and short-term viewers regarding their satisfaction with the Chinese economy, society and being a Chinese person. This means the impact of viewing American TV series on the perceptions of Chinese reality may limited to culture.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

The findings show some elements of societal firewalls, as Chinese viewers tend to be concentrated along the coast and in the bigger cities. These cities have a relatively higher Internet penetration rate. The audiences in these cities have more freedom to access American TV series compared to people in other cities. Much of the population of China in rural areas and smaller cities does not watch American TV series. The findings also show some elements of individual firewalls, as the majority of Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are of a relatively higher education level, which reduced the obstacles to understanding American culture. In addition, the findings show that Chinese audiences of American TV series are mainly in the age group of 18-30 years old, which is the age of exploring cultural values and identity. Under these circumstances, Chinese audiences of



American TV series are more likely to form their cultural values with references of American culture.

The findings show that even those Chinese viewers who do watch American TV series are not giving up their support for Chinese values but are often adopting a more hybrid set of values. The survey findings show that online viewership of American television series could predict perceptions of American values after demographical variables were controlled, which indicates that watching American television series has a cultivation effect on Chinese audiences' perceptions of American values. Viewership predicts perception of American values; heavy viewers and long-term viewers are more favourable towards American values than light viewers and short-term viewers. Specifically, heavy viewers seems more favourable towards American values (sexual liberation, modernity, individualism, leisure, and adventurousness). The length of viewing also has an impact as long-term viewers favour American values (sexual liberation, modernity, competition, individualism, leisure, and adventurousness) more than short-term viewers.

However, this effect has a significantly opposite impact regarding Chinese values. Total exposure time did not predict perceptions of overall Chinese value. Only the length of viewing predicted perception of overall Chinese value, with long-term viewers tending to be less supportive of Chinese overall value than short-term viewers. More specifically, heavy viewers are less favourable toward the Chinese value of sexual conservatism than light viewers. Long-term viewers are less favourable towards the Chinese value of sexual conservatism, relationship by status, respect for tradition, and non-competitiveness than short-term viewers. But the length of viewing American TV series did predict one Chinese value, family orientation, with long-term viewers more supportive of family orientation than short-term viewers. Therefore, American values and Chinese values integrated with each other within Chinese audiences' value systems. This impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences could fit into Berry (1997)'s pattern of acculturation as integration, or what others call hybridity, referring to the Chinese value system being combined with American values by watching American series.

The researcher of this study proposes that viewership is not the only indicator concerning the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences' values in the online media era. Gratifications could alter the direction of the impact of American TV series by revising the Chinese audiences' perceptions of American reality. As indicated in the findings, people who watch American TV series for the gratifications of entertainment and to learn take what they see on American TV series more seriously than people desiring the gratifications of sociability and escape. Therefore, this also shows

in the prediction of values, as entertainment and learning have stronger predictive power regarding Chinese viewers' attitudes to American values than sociability and escape; this means that Chinese viewers seeking the gratifications of entertainment and learning are more likely to embrace American values than people seeking gratifications of sociability and escape. On the contrary, Chinese viewers seeking the gratifications of sociability and escape are more likely to embrace Chinese values.

But at the same time, an audience may not view American TV series for only a single gratification; the audience may desire multiple gratifications. The impact of gratifications on the audiences' values is more like a combined effect of the gratifications. Chinese audiences are not passively accepting what they see on American TV series, as cultivation theorists have proposed. The impact of cultivation may not purely be defined by the amount of time audiences spend viewing television content online, but may also be influenced by the audiences' seeking multiple gratifications.

Moreover, the findings show that the viewing length significantly predicts Chinese viewers' satisfaction regarding their own culture, with the long-term viewers being less satisfied with Chinese culture compared to short-term viewers. Also, viewership failed to predict the viewers' satisfaction regarding the Chinese economy, society, and self-esteem. This means that viewing American TV series may only impact the Chinese viewers' perception of their own culture rather than other areas, which supports Buckley (2015)'s observation that Chinese embrace America's culture but not its policies.

This chapter has examined the relationship between viewership and the viewers' perceptions of cultural values and also considered the potential influence of different gratifications. While this chapter has dealt with methodological concerns over predispositions (and other factors besides TV viewing influencing results) through controlling various demographic factors, additional investigation using an additional research method could shed more light on this matter. To this end, the following chapter explains the findings from an experiment that was conducted to investigate the relationship between watching American TV series and perceptions of cultural values.

## **Chapter 7 Quasi-experimental tests of the relationship between perceptions of cultural values and television consumption among Chinese viewers**

“In some ways, American cultural influence reaches into China deeper than ever. Despite censorship, restrictions on cultural imports and heavy Internet barriers, American television content are widely and avidly consumed. However, even when America has cultural soft power and cultural attractiveness, that doesn't mean that Chinese people identify with or support American policies.” (Buckley, 2015)

-- Chris Buckley, *The New York Times*, 28 September, 2015

### **7.1 Introduction**

The majority of studies regarding media effects on cultural values compare differences in attitudes towards values between audiences with different media consumption patterns. But rarely do we see longitudinal studies that compare changes among the same group of people over time. To supplement the survey, an experiment was conducted to determine the relationship between television viewing and possible changes in viewers' attitudes.

As outlined in the methodology chapter, participants were recruited from the Internet. The target study participant was Chinese people who had never seen American TV series. To ensure geographical diversity, the study chose Beijing (Northern China), Hangzhou (Eastern China), Wuhan (Central China), Guangzhou (Southern China), and Chengdu (Western China) as recruiting cities. These cities are the political and economic centres in their region and netizens in these regions account for 91.7 percent of Chinese netizens (CNNIC, 2014), which accounts for the majority of Chinese audiences who watch American TV series.

The research involved 65 participants. The participants were divided in two groups: 33 people in the treatment group and 32 people in the control group. The participants were mixed in gender, level of education, age, income and location (urban or suburban) to avoid group bias. The treatment group was asked to view three seasons of American TV series and fill in a questionnaire before and after

viewing each series. The treatment process was fixed as viewing the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, the fantasy series *Arrow*, and the drama series *House of Cards* to control the influence of treatment order. Ten people in treatment group were asked to participate in an in-depth interview after they viewed all the television series. The control group did not watch any American television series during this time, but filled a questionnaire at the beginning and end of the experiment, respectively. Moreover, all the participants were also invited to participate in follow-up research after six months; 63 participants returned feedback at that time. The findings from the experimental research are outlined below.

## 7.2 Findings

*Hypothesis 3.5: Viewing American TV series strengthen Chinese audiences' perceptions of American cultural values and reality, weaken their perceptions of Chinese cultural values, and weaken their satisfactions of Chinese reality.*

### 7.2.1 The impact of viewing American TV series on perceptions of American reality

Awareness regarding American values is based on the audiences' perceptions of American reality. Greatly believing in televised reality leads to strong awareness of values (Gerbner et al., 2002a). The awareness of American reality were correlated with perceptions of overall American values ( $r = .242, p = .00$ ) in this study. Before testing the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural values, the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences' perceptions of American reality should be evaluated first. Also, different genres of television series may generate different perceptions of reality among audiences. In this study, the fantasy series *Arrow*, adopted from DC comics, is loosely based on reality, and may therefore achieve a lower perception of reality among television audiences compared with the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory* and the drama series *House of Cards*.

When asked, 'how accurately do you think American television series reflect American society and culture', the participants used a 10-point Likert scale to answer the question. '1' stands for not at all accurate, and '10' stand for very accurate. Because the perception of American reality is the tie between viewing behaviour and cognition of values, a higher score in the answers shows that the audiences tend to believe what they saw on television, and tend to be identify American values in the television series. To test whether the perception of American reality has changed during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to

evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in perception of American reality based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- that had not seen any American TV series (at the start of the experiment) (M=6.21, SD=1.32, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=6.55, SD=1.68, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=6.21, SD=1.76, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=7.18, SD=2.01, n=33), and six months after the end of the experiment (M=7.00, SD=1.59, n=32); control group- start of experiment (M=6.88, SD=1.18, n=32), end of experiment (M=7.06, SD=1.32, n=32), after six months (M=6.94, SD=1.63, n=31). As Figure 7.1 shows, the mean score of participants' perceptions of American reality in the treatment group rose after the audience had seen the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, but fell back after the audience had seen the fantasy series *Arrow*, then rose drastically after the audiences had seen the drama series *House of Cards*. This shows that the audiences' perception of American reality is higher when they watch drama and comedy series versus a fantasy series. This suggests that the genre of a television series is an important factor and could influence participants' perceptions of reality.

To compare the changes in perception, it is necessary to compare the data before and after each treatment. The assumption of normality was evaluated by using histograms and found to be tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.03$ ,  $p = .41$ . The ANOVA was significant;  $F(7,251) = 1.90$ ,  $p = .07$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and to conclude that there is no significant difference in perceptions of American reality within different treatment processes. Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pair-wise differences among the groups were conducted by using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tukey's HSD test revealed no significant pair-wise differences on the mean scores of participants' perception of American reality before and after the experiment. However, to determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with data obtained at the beginning of experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was performed. The results were compared to the scores of the participants at the beginning of experiment when they had not seen any American TV series. There was a significant difference in the scores for the treatment group in the process after watching *The House of Cards*,  $t(32) = 2.87$ ,  $p = .007$ ; and after six months,  $t(30.73) = 2.73$ ,  $p = .010$ ; but no significant difference was found in the process of watching *The Big Bang Theory*,  $t(32) = 1.22$ ,  $p = .23$ ; or *Arrow*,  $t(32) = .00$ ,  $p = 1.00$ . This means that Chinese audiences tend to think what they saw

on *House of Cards* is more real compared to the beginning of the experiment, and this belief could be stable as it lasted for six months. The findings support hypothesis 3.5 that viewing American TV series strengthen Chinese audiences' perceptions of American reality.

**Table 7.1 Participants' perceptions of American reality, by groups**

	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	6.21	1.32
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	6.55	1.68
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	6.21	1.76
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	7.18	2.01
TG: After six months	32	7.00	1.59
CG: Start	32	6.88	1.18
CG: End	32	7.06	1.32
CG: After six months	31	6.94	1.63

TG = Treatment Group, CG = Control Group.

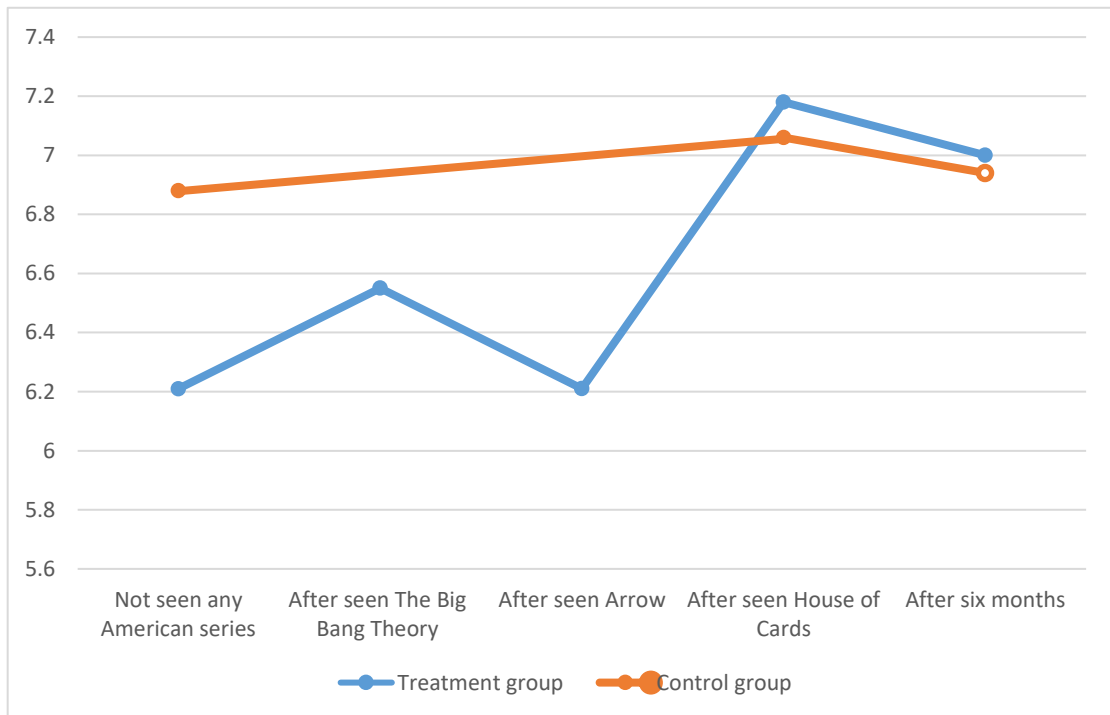
**Table 7.2 Tukey's HSD test applied to the difference in participants' perceptions of American reality during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.66 -.85 -.72
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.33 -.33 -.52 -.39
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.00 -.33 -.66 -.85 -.72
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.97 .97 .31 .12 .25
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment) CG: Start CG: End	.79 -.18 .13

	CG: After six months	-.06 .06
CG: End	CG: Start CG: After six months	.19 .13
CG: After six months	CG: Start CG: End	.06 -.13

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.1 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of American reality during treatment processes**



## 7.2.2 The impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese values

### 1. Overall Chinese value

To test the change of participants' attitudes of the overall Chinese value during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards the overall Chinese value based on treatment process (N=259). The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the start of the experiment) (M=3.37, SD= .46, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=3.14, SD= .42, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=3.11, SD= .41, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=3.18, SD= .49, n=33), and after six months (M=3.36, SD= .38, n=32); the control group- at the start of the experiment (M=3.48, SD= .44, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=3.48, SD= .36, n=32),

and after six months ( $M=3.50$ ,  $SD=.39$ ,  $n=31$ ). The mean score shows that the Chinese audiences' support for the overall Chinese value dropped after viewing *The Big Bang Theory*, then it slowly dropped down while watching the fantasy series *Arrow*, but the mean score rose slightly during the drama series *House of Cards* and continued rising during the following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found to be tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's test;  $F(7,251) = .74$ ,  $p = .64$ . The ANOVA was significant,  $F(7,251) = 4.85$ ,  $p = .00$ . Therefore, there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant difference in attitudes of the overall Chinese value due to different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among groups were conducted using Tukey's HSD test, since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitudes in the treatment group and the control group. Before watching any American TV series, there were no statistically significant differences of the overall Chinese values between the treatment group and the control group. But after watching *The Big Bang Theory* and *Arrow*, the treatment group became less supportive of the overall Chinese value compared to the control group during the process. This suggests that viewing American TV series had an impact on Chinese audiences' preference for the overall Chinese value. In other words, the more American TV series Chinese audiences viewed, the less supportive of the overall Chinese value they became. There are no significant differences in the mean scores of the control group at the beginning and end of the experiment. To determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing data obtained in each treatment process with data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show that, compared to the scores from the start of the experiment, there was a significant difference in the scores for treatment group in the process of after they had seen *The Big Bang Theory*,  $t(32) = -3.59$ ,  $p = .001$ ; after they had seen *Arrow*,  $t(32) = -3.35$ ,  $p = .002$ ; and after they had seen *House of Cards*,  $t(32) = -2.25$ ,  $p = .032$ ; however there was no significant difference in the scores after six months,  $t(31.90) = -.21$ ,  $p = .836$ . This means that watching these American TV series has had an impact on Chinese participants' attitudes towards the overall Chinese value, as the participants became less supportive of the overall Chinese value after seeing these American TV series. The findings support hypothesis 3.5 that viewing American TV series weaken their perceptions of Chinese values.



**Table 7.3 Participants' perceptions of the overall Chinese value, by groups**

	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.37	.46
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.14	.42
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.11	.41
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.18	.49
TG: After six months	32	3.36	.38
CG: Start	32	3.48	.44
CG: End	32	3.48	.36
CG: After six months	31	3.50	.39

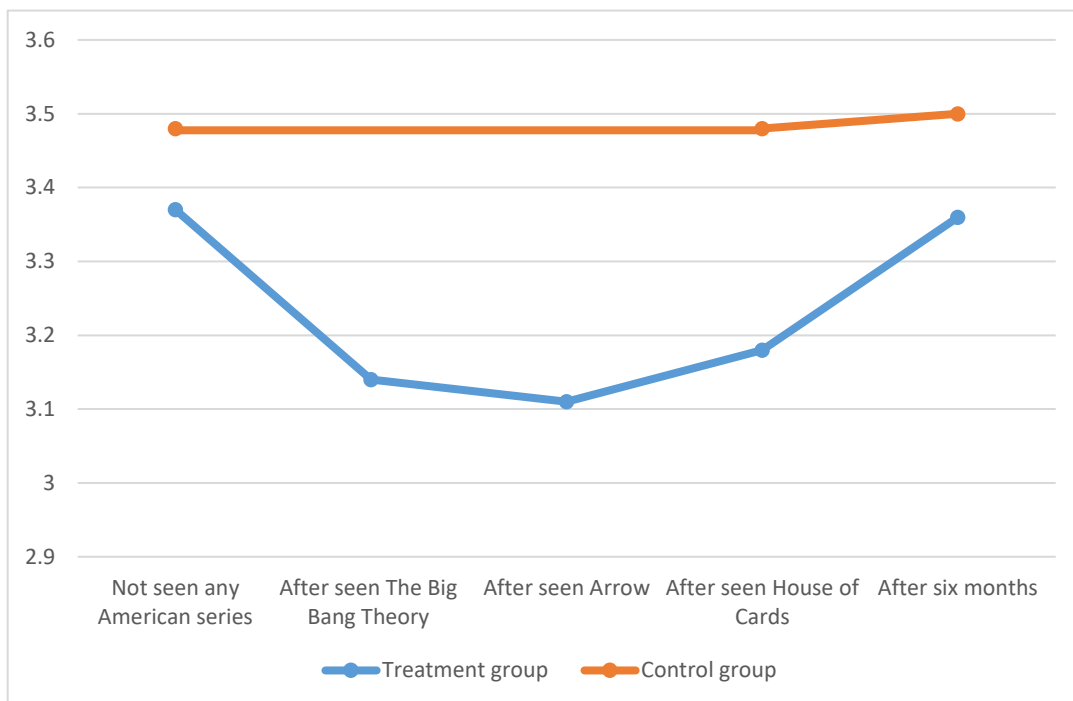
**Table 7.4 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference on participants' perceptions of the overall Chinese value during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.11 -.11 -.13
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.23 -.34 <sup>※</sup> -.34 <sup>※</sup> -.36 <sup>※</sup>
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.26 -.03 -.37 <sup>※</sup> -.37 <sup>※</sup> -.39 <sup>※</sup>
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.19 .07 -.30 -.30 -.32
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment) CG: Start	-.01 .18 -.12

	CG: End CG: After six months	-.12 -.14
CG: End	CG: Start CG: After six months	.00 -.02
CG: After six months	CG: Start CG: End	.02 .02

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.2 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of the overall Chinese value during treatment processes**



## 2. Sexual conservatism

When asked about whether they agree with sexual conservatism, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher values mean the participants are more supportive of sexual conservatism. To test the change of participants' attitudes to sexual conservatism during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards sexual conservatism based on the treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight steps: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the start of the experiment) (M=3.42, SD=.75, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=2.73, SD=.88, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=2.67, SD=.74,

n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=2.70, SD=.73, n=33), and after six months (M=3.13, SD=.79, n=32); the control group- at the start of the experiment (M=3.53, SD=.67, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=3.38, SD= .83, n=32), and after six months (M=3.42, SD= .85, n=31). As the mean score shows that the Chinese audiences' support for sexual conservatism dropped significantly after they had seen the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, and their support continued to decline with a slight drop after they had seen the fantasy series *Arrow*, but increased slightly with a upward change after the audiences had seen the drama series *House of Cards* and continue rising during the next six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found to be tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's test;  $F(7,251) = .475, p = .852$ . The ANOVA was significant;  $F(7,251) = 7.268, p = .00$ . Therefore, there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is a significant difference attitude of sexual conservatism within different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among groups were conducted by using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed significant pairwise differences of sexual conservatism in the treatment group during the treatment process, with people in the treatment group becoming less supportive of sexual conservatism after they had seen these American TV series. There was no statistically significant difference in attitudes of sexual conservatism between the treatment group and the control group at the beginning of the experiment. But after they watched each TV series, the treatment group not only became less supportive of sexual conservatism compared with their attitude in the beginning of the experiment, but the results show a statistically significant difference compared to the control group. A repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted to determine the changes in viewers' attitudes during the treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with the data obtained at the beginning of experiment. The results show there was a significant difference in the scores for the treatment group in the process of the experiment after they had seen *The Big Bang Theory*,  $t(32) = -4.95, p = .000$ ; after seeing *Arrow*,  $t(32) = -6.57, p = .000$ ; after seeing *House of Cards*,  $t(32) = -4.42, p = .000$ , and after six months,  $t(31.89) = -2.05, p = .049$ . This means after the audience had seen these American TV series the participants became less supportive of sexual conservatism. This impact is relatively stable as it lasted for six months.

**Table 7.5 Participants' perceptions of sexual conservatism, by groups**

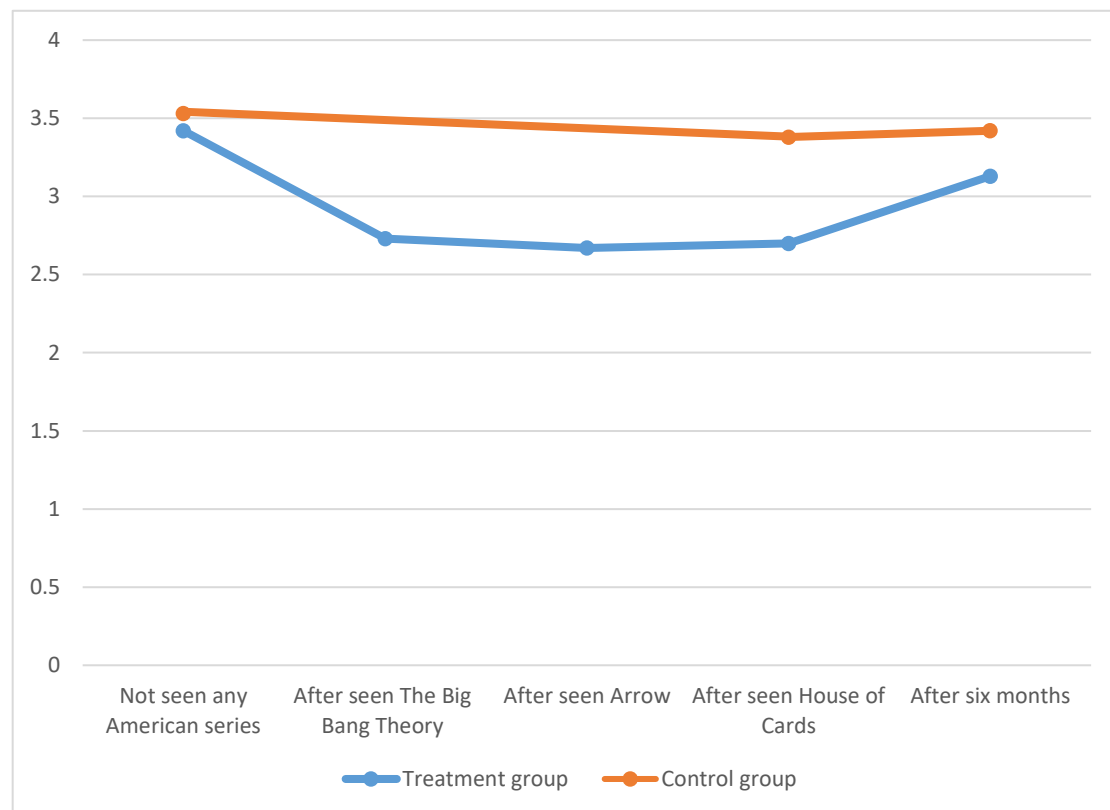
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.42	.75
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	2.73	.88
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	2.67	.74
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	2.70	.73
TG: After six months	32	3.13	.79
CG: Start	32	3.53	.67
CG: End	32	3.38	.83
CG: After six months	31	3.42	.85

**Table 7.6 Results of Tukey's HSD test of the difference on participants' perceptions of sexual conservatism during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	-.11
	CG: End	.05
	CG: After six months	.00
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seeing any American TV series (start of experiment)	-.70 <sup>**</sup>
	CG: Start	-.80 <sup>**</sup>
	CG: End	-.65 <sup>**</sup>
	CG: After six months	-.69 <sup>**</sup>
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	-.76 <sup>**</sup>
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	-.06
	CG: Start	-.86 <sup>**</sup>
	CG: End	-.71 <sup>**</sup>
	CG: After six months	-.75 <sup>**</sup>
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	-.73 <sup>**</sup>
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	.03
	CG: Start	-.83 <sup>**</sup>
	CG: End	-.68 <sup>**</sup>
	CG: After six months	-.72 <sup>**</sup>
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	-.30
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	.43
	CG: Start	-.41
	CG: End	-.25
	CG: After six months	-.29
CG: End	CG: Start	-.16
	CG: After six months	-.04
CG: After six months	CG: Start	-.11
	CG: End	.04

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.3 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of sexual conservatism during treatment processes**



### 3. Relationship by status

When the participants were asked whether they agree with relationship by status, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants are more supportive of relationship by status. To test the change of participants' attitudes of relationship by status during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards relationship by status based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable experimental process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the start of the experiment) (M=3.00, SD=.75, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=2.76, SD=.94, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=2.67, SD=.85, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=2.91, SD=.98, n=33), and after six months (M=3.06, SD=.62, n=32); the control group- at the start of the experiment (M=3.28, SD=.90, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=3.31, SD=.90, n=32), and after six months (M=3.32,

SD=.70, n=31). The mean score shows the Chinese audiences' support for relationship by status dropped quickly after they had seen the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, and their support continued dropping from watching the fantasy series *Arrow*, but their support for relationship by status rose a bit after they had seen drama series *House of Cards* and continue rising during the following six months. However, opinions regarding relationship by status among the control group did not change much.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.783$ ,  $p = .091$ . The ANOVA was significant;  $F(7,251) = 3.07$ ,  $p = .004$ . Therefore, there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is a significant difference attitude of relationship by status within different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitudes within the treatment group and the control group. Before the experiment, treatment group had no difference in their attitude to relationship by status compared with control group. But after they had seen *Arrow* they were less supportive of relationship by status compared to the data of control group at the end of the experiment. To determine the changes during the treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was a significant difference in the scores of the treatment group in the process of seeing *Arrow*,  $t(32) = -2.35$ ,  $p = .025$ , but there are no significant differences in the other processes. This shows that participants in the treatment group became less supportive of relationship by status after seeing *Arrow*.

**Table 7.7 Participants' perceptions of relationship by status, by groups**

	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.00	.75
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	2.76	.94
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	2.67	.85
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	2.91	.98
TG: After six months	32	3.06	.62
CG: Start	32	3.28	.77

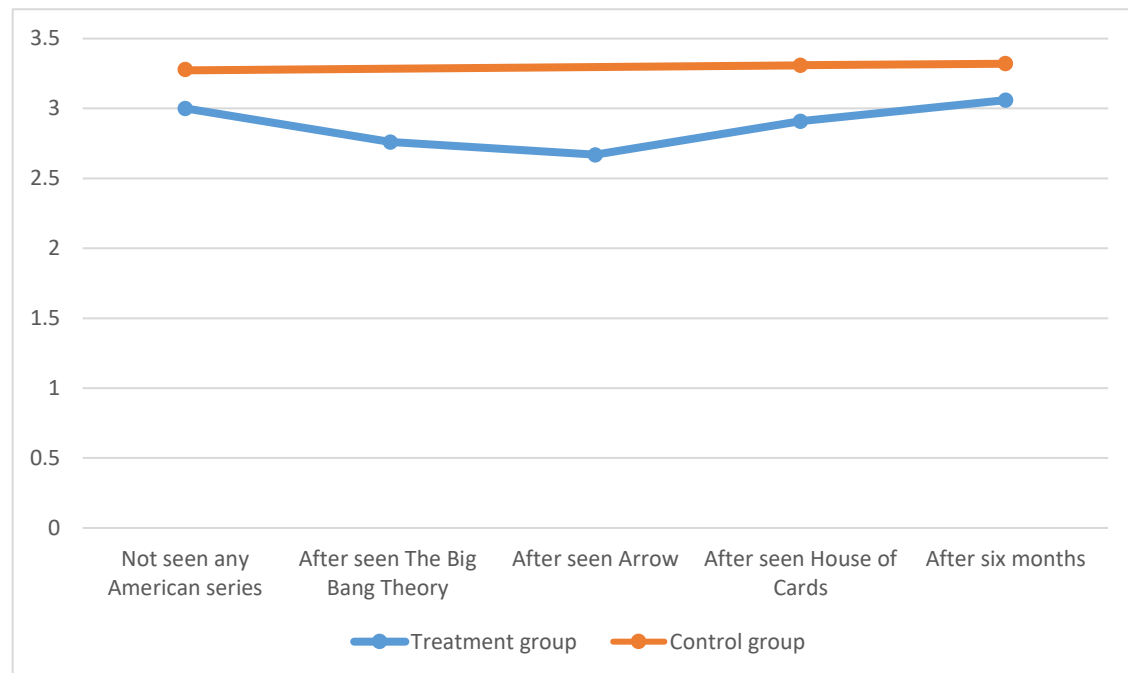
CG: End	32	3.31	.90
CG: After six months	31	3.32	.70

**Table 7.8 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference of participants' perceptions of relationship by status during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	-.28
	CG: End	-.31
	CG: After six months	-.32
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	-.24
	CG: Start	-.52
	CG: End	-.55
	CG: After six months	-.57
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	-.33
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	-.09
	CG: Start	-.61
	CG: End	-.64 <sup>※</sup>
	CG: After six months	-.66 <sup>※</sup>
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	-.09
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	.24
	CG: Start	-.37
	CG: End	-.40
	CG: After six months	-.41
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	.06
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	.15
	CG: Start	-.22
	CG: End	-.25
	CG: After six months	-.26
CG: End	CG: Start	.03
	CG: After six months	-.01
CG: After six months	CG: Start	.04
	CG: End	.01

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.4 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of relationship by status during treatment processes**



#### 4. Prudence

When asked whether they agree with prudence, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants were more supportive of prudence. To test the change of participants' attitudes to prudence during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards prudence based on the treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the start of the experiment) (M=3.85, SD=1.00, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=3.48, SD=1.15, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=3.33, SD=1.14, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=3.30, SD=1.13, n=33), and after six months (M=3.84, SD= .81, n=32); control group- at the beginning of the experiment (M=3.91, SD=.82, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=3.84, SD=.81, n=32), after six months (M=4.10, SD=.70, n=31). The mean score shows that the Chinese audiences' support for prudence dropped significantly after they had seen the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, continued dropping after watching the fantasy series *Arrow*, and the drop slows down after watching the drama series *House of Cards*, but there was a rise after the following six months. On the contrary, control group's holding of prudence only drops a little bit during experiment time, but rose after the



following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(2,251) = 5.08$ ,  $p = .000$ . The ANOVA was significant,  $F(2,251) = 3.00$ ,  $p = .005$ . Therefore, there is a significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is a significant difference in attitude to prudence within different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among groups were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitudes towards treatment group and control group. To determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each process with the data obtained from the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show that there was a significant difference in the scores for treatment group in the process of after seeing *The Big Bang Theory*  $t(32) = -2.10$ ,  $p = .044$ ; after seeing *Arrow* ( $M=3.33$ ,  $SD=1.14$ ),  $t(32) = -2.52$ ,  $p = .017$ ; and after seeing *House of Cards* ( $M=3.30$ ,  $SD=1.13$ ),  $t(32.146) = -2.41$ ,  $p = .022$ . This means participants in the treatment group became less supportive of prudence after they had seen these American TV series.

**Table 7.9 Participants' perceptions of prudence, by groups**

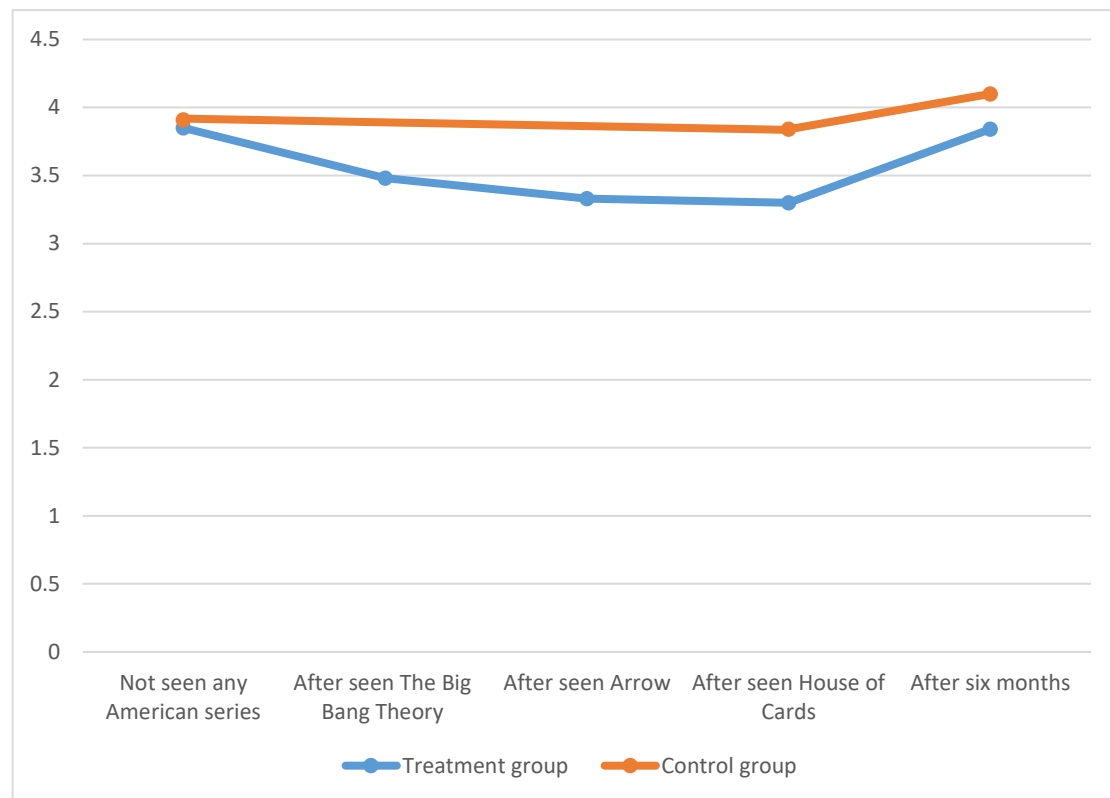
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.85	1.00
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.48	1.14
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.33	1.14
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.30	1.13
TG: After six months	32	3.84	.81
CG: Start	32	3.91	.82
CG: End	32	3.84	.81
CG: After six months	31	4.10	.70

**Table 7.10 Results of Tukey's HSD test the difference on participants' perceptions of prudence during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
<b>TG: Had not seen any American TV series</b>	CG: Start	-.06
	CG: End	.00
	CG: After six months	-.25
<b>TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.36
	CG: Start	-.42
	CG: End	-.36
	CG: After six months	-.61
<b>TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.52
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	-.15
	CG: Start	-.57
	CG: End	-.51
	CG: After six months	-.76 <sup>※</sup>
<b>TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.55
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	-.03
	CG: Start	-.60
	CG: End	-.54
	CG: After six months	-.79 <sup>※</sup>
<b>TG: After six months</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.00
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	.54
	CG: Start	-.06
	CG: End	.00
	CG: After six months	-.25
<b>CG: End</b>	CG: Start	-.06
	CG: After six months	-.25
<b>CG: After six months</b>	CG: Start	.19
	CG: End	.25

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.5 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of prudence during treatment processes**



## 5. Family orientation

When asked whether they agree with family orientation, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants were more supportive of family orientation. To test the change of participants' attitudes to family orientation during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards family orientation based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the start of the experiment) (M=4.33, SD=.69, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=4.00, SD=.79, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=4.06, SD=.93, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=4.12, SD=.65, n=33), and after six months (M=4.38, SD=.66, n=32); control group- at the start of the experiment (M=4.41, SD=.50, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=4.41, SD=.50, n=32), and after six months (M=4.16, SD=.58, n=31). The mean score shows the Chinese audiences' attitudes to family orientation

dropped quickly after they watched the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, but continue rising after seeing the fantasy series *Arrow* and the drama series *House of Cards* and after the following six months. At the same time, the mean score of the control group did not change, however it dropped after the following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.26, p=.27$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7,251) = 1.93, p=.065$ . Therefore there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference attitude to family orientation within different experimental processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitudes between the treatment group and the control group. To determine the changes during the treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was a significant difference in the scores for treatment group in the process of after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* ( $M=4.00, SD=.79$ ),  $t(32) = -2.77, p=.009$ . This means participants in treatment group became less supportive of family orientation after seeing *The Big Bang Theory*.

**Table 7.11 Participants' perceptions of family orientation, by groups**

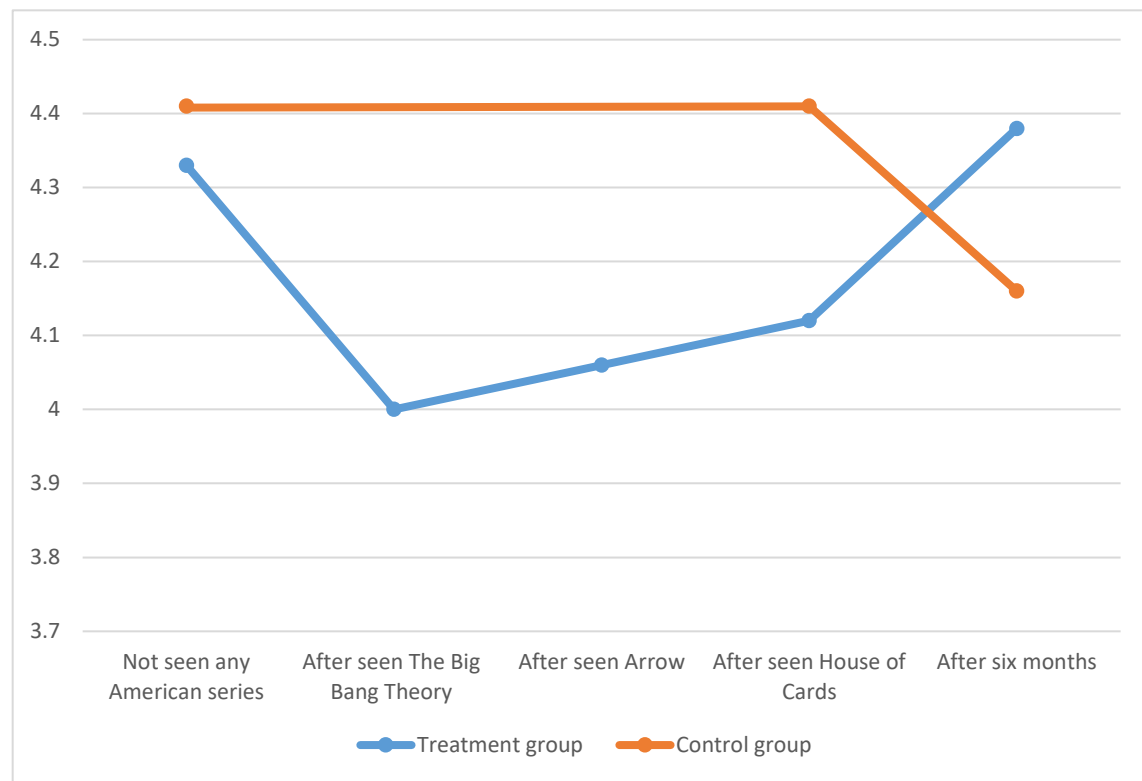
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	4.33	.69
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	4.00	.79
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	4.06	.93
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	4.12	.65
TG: After six months	32	4.38	.66
CG: Start	32	4.41	.50
CG: End	32	4.41	.50
CG: After six months	31	4.16	.58

**Table 7.12 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference of participants' perceptions of family orientation during different treatment processes**

<b>Treatment/Control group</b>	<b>Comparison group</b>	<b>Mean difference</b>
<b>TG: Had not seen any American TV series</b>	CG: Start	-.07
	CG: End	-.07
	CG: After six months	.17
<b>TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.33
	CG: Start	-.41
	CG: End	-.41
	CG: After six months	-.16
<b>TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.27
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	.06
	CG: Start	-.35
	CG: End	-.35
	CG: After six months	-.10
<b>TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.21
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	.06
	CG: Start	-.29
	CG: End	-.29
	CG: After six months	-.04
<b>TG: After six months</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.04
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	.25
	CG: Start	-.03
	CG: End	-.03
	CG: After six months	.21
<b>CG: End</b>	CG: Start	.00
	CG: After six months	.25
<b>CG: After six months</b>	CG: Start	-.25
	CG: End	-.25

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.6 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of family orientation during treatment processes**



## 6. Non-competitiveness

When asked whether they agree with non-competitiveness, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants are more supportive of non-competitiveness. To test the change of participants' attitudes to non-competitiveness during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards non-competitiveness based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the start of the experiment) (M=2.15, SD=.76, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=2.39, SD=.97, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=2.27, SD=.63, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=2.33, SD=.96, n=33), and after six months (M=2.22, SD=.96, n=32); control group- at the start of the experiment (M=2.28, SD=.89, n=32), the end of the experiment (M=2.34, SD=.87, n=32), and after six months (M=2.48, SD=.93, n=31). The mean scores show that the Chinese audiences' support for non-competitiveness rose

significantly during watching the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, then dropped after seeing the fantasy series *Arrow*, but rose a little bit after seeing the drama series *House of Cards*, however, it dropped again after six months. Meanwhile, the mean score of the control group's attitude of non-competitiveness continue rising during the experiment and the following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.54$ ,  $p = .16$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7,251) = .46$ ,  $p = .86$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and also conclude there is no significant difference in attitude to non-competitiveness within different experimental processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among groups were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitudes towards experimental procedures between the treatment group and the control group. To determine the changes during treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with the data obtained from the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there were no significant differences in the scores for the treatment group in each process.

**Table 7.13 Participants' perceptions of non-competitiveness, by groups**

	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	2.15	.76
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	2.39	.97
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	2.27	.63
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	2.33	.96
TG: After six months	32	2.22	.83
CG: Start	32	2.28	.89
CG: End	32	2.34	.87
CG: After six months	31	2.48	.93

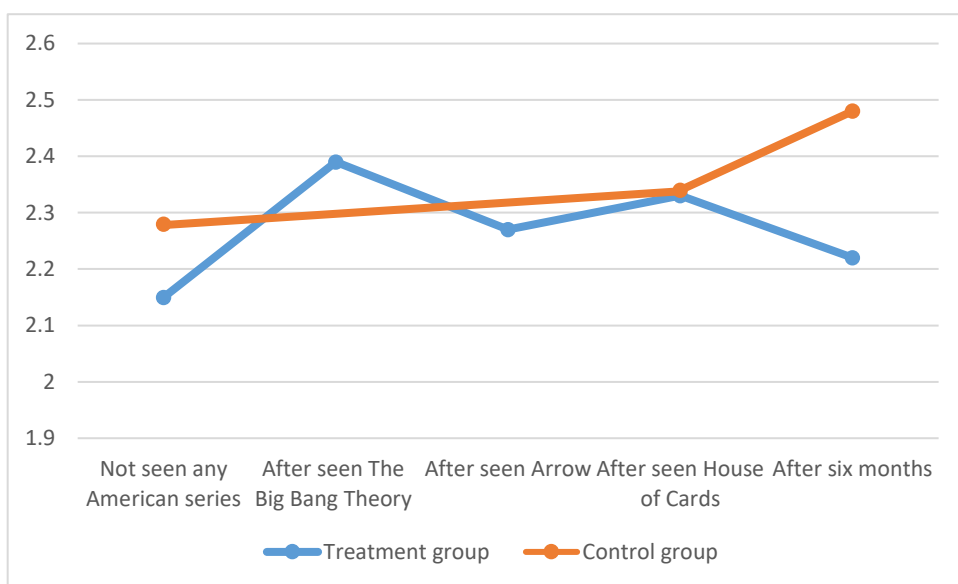
**Table 7.14 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' perceptions of non-competitiveness during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American	CG: Start	-.13
	CG: End	-.19
	CG: After six months	

TV series		-.33
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment) CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.24 .11 .05 -.09
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.12 -.12 -.01 -.07 -.21
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.18 .06 .05 -.01 -.15
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.07 -.11 -.06 -.13 -.27
CG: End	CG: Start CG: After six months	.06 -.14
CG: After six months	CG: Start CG: End	.20 .14

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.7 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of non-competitiveness during treatment processes**





## 7. Respect for tradition

When asked whether they agree with respect for tradition, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants are more supportive of respect for tradition. To test the change of participants' attitude of respect for tradition during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards respect for tradition based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the start of the experiment) (M=3.33, SD=.65, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=3.15, SD=.51, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=3.30, SD=.53, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=3.55, SD=.67, n=33), and after six months (M=3.28, SD=.92, n=32); control group- at the start of the experiment (M=3.56, SD=.72, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=3.53, SD=.76, n=32), and after six months (M=3.39, SD=.71, n=31). The mean scores show that the Chinese audiences' respect for tradition dropped quickly from watching the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, but rose when they had seen the fantasy series *Arrow* and the drama series *House of Cards*, then dropped during the following six months. On the contrary, the control group's respect for tradition dropped a little during the experiment and the following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7, 251) = 3.66, p = .001$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7, 251) = 1.42, p = .199$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in attitude of respect for tradition within the different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among groups were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitudes towards the treatment group and the control group. To determine the changes in attitude during the treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was no significant difference in the scores of the treatment group during treatment process. This means participants in the treatment group had no significant changes in their support for respect for tradition.

**Table 7.15 Participants' perceptions of respect for tradition, by groups**

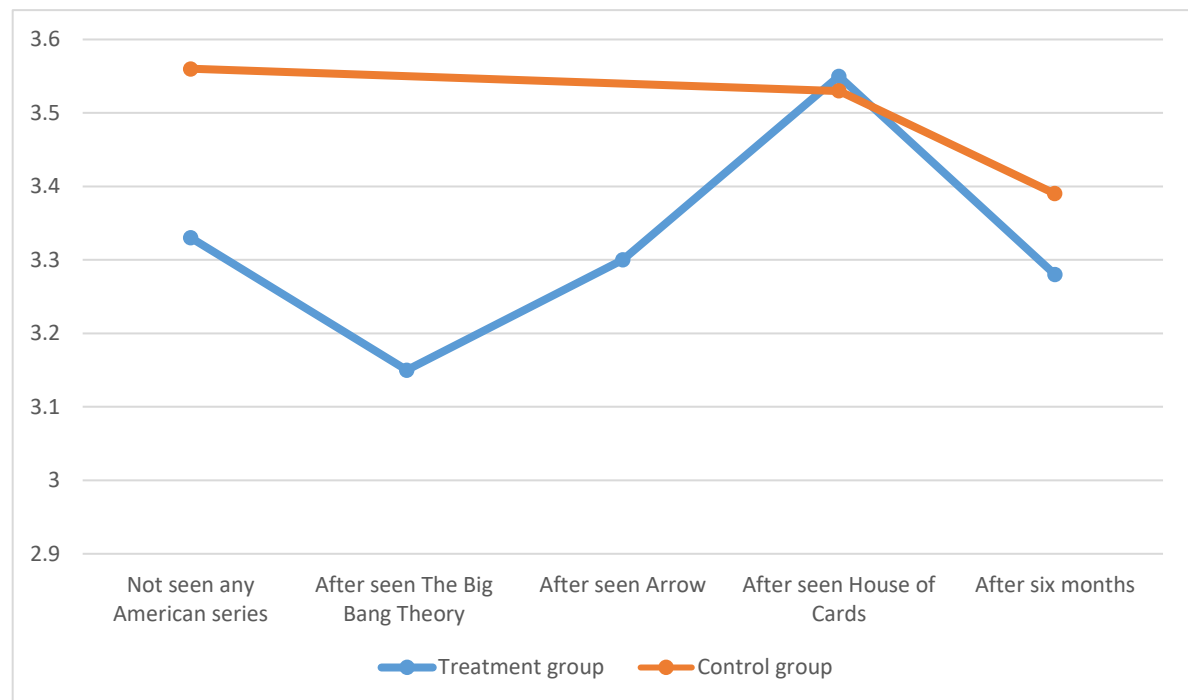
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.33	.65
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.15	.51
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.30	.53
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.55	.67
TG: After six months	32	3.28	.92
CG: Start	32	3.56	.72
CG: End	32	3.53	.76
CG: After six months	31	3.39	.71

**Table 7.16 The results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' perceptions of respect for tradition during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	-.23
	CG: End	-.20
	CG: After six months	-.05
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.18
	CG: Start	-.41
	CG: End	-.38
	CG: After six months	-.24
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.03
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	.15
	CG: Start	-.26
	CG: End	-.23
	CG: After six months	-.08
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.21
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	.24
	CG: Start	-.02
	CG: End	.01
	CG: After six months	.16
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.05
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	-.26
	CG: Start	-.28
	CG: End	-.25
	CG: After six months	-.11
CG: End	CG: Start	-.03
	CG: After six months	.14
CG: After six months	CG: Start	-.18
	CG: End	-.14

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.8 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of respect for tradition during treatment processes**



## 8. Thrift

When asked whether they agree with thrift, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants are more supportive of thrift. To test the change of participants' attitudes to thrift during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards thrift based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) (M=3.48, SD=1.15, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=3.45, SD=1.12, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=3.45, SD=1.09, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=3.36, SD=1.25, n=33), and after six months (M=3.63, SD=.87, n=32); control group- at the start of the experiment (M=3.41, SD=1.16, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=3.56, SD=.95, n=32), and after six months (M=3.61, SD=.88, n=31). The mean scores show that Chinese audiences' support for thrift dropped a little bit after they had seen the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, keep in the same level during watching the fantasy series *Arrow*, but dropped significantly after seeing the drama

series *House of Cards*, then rising again during following six months. On the opposite, the control group's support for thrift rose during the experiment and following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7, 251) = 2.29, p = .28$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7, 251) = .26, p = .97$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in the attitude to thrift within different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitude between the treatment group and the control group. To determine the changes during treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was no significant difference in the scores for the treatment group in each process.

**Table 7.17 Participants' perceptions of thrift, by groups**

	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.48	1.15
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.45	1.12
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.45	1.09
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.36	1.25
TG: After six months	32	3.63	.87
CG: Start	32	3.41	1.16
CG: End	32	3.56	.95
CG: After six months	31	3.61	.88

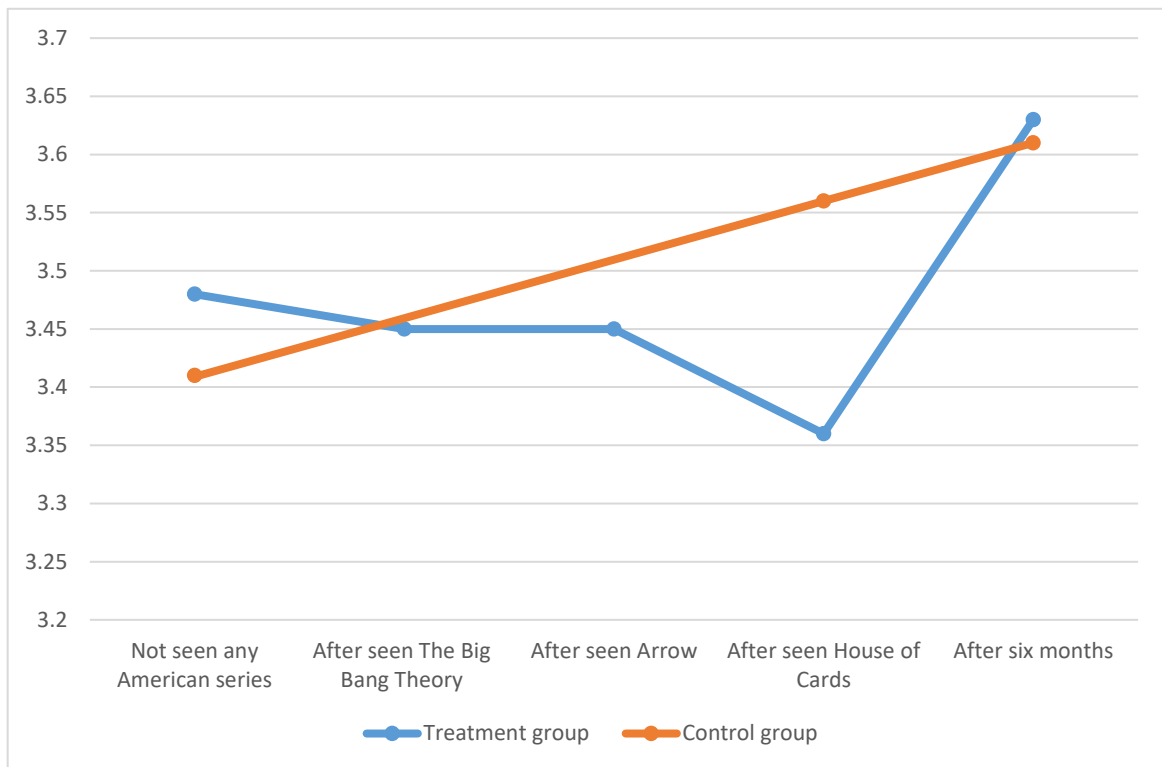
**Table 7.18 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference to participants' perceptions of thrift during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	.08
	CG: End	-.08
	CG: After six months	-.13
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.03
	CG: Start	.05
	CG: End	

	CG: After six months	-.11 -.16
<b>TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.03 .00 .05 -.11 -.16
<b>TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.12 -.09 -.04 -.20 -.25
<b>TG: After six months</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment) CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.14 .26 .22 .06 .01
<b>CG: End</b>	CG: Start CG: After six months	.16 -.05
<b>CG: After six months</b>	CG: Start CG: End	.21 .05

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.9 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of thrift during treatment processes**



### 7.2.3 The impact of viewing American TV series on American values

#### 1. Overall American value

To test the change of participants' attitude to the overall American value during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards the overall American value based on experimental process ( $N=259$ ). The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) ( $M=3.59$ ,  $SD=.52$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* ( $M=3.68$ ,  $SD=.47$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *Arrow* ( $M=3.65$ ,  $SD=.50$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) ( $M=3.59$ ,  $SD=.43$ ,  $n=33$ ), and after six months ( $M=3.64$ ,  $SD=.34$ ,  $n=32$ ); control group- at the beginning of the experiment ( $M=3.58$ ,  $SD=.43$ ,  $n=32$ ), at the end of the experiment ( $M=3.61$ ,  $SD=.37$ ,  $n=32$ ), and after six months ( $M=3.64$ ,  $SD=.45$ ,  $n=31$ ). After they had seen comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, the attitude of the treatment group towards the overall American value became more supportive, then it dropped back after seeing the fantasy series *Arrow* and the drama series *House of Cards*; however, the level of support increased after six months. The control group's attitude towards the overall American value became a little more supportive during the experiment and the following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.08$ ,  $p=.38$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7,251) = .18$ ,  $p=.99$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is a significant difference attitude of the overall American value within different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitudes towards each treatment process. To determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process to the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was no significant difference in the scores for treatment group in each process, compared with the score at the beginning of the experiment. The findings reject hypothesis 3.5 that viewing American TV series strengthen Chinese audiences' perceptions of American values, in favor of the alternative hypothesis that viewing American TV series did not strengthen Chinese audiences' perceptions of American values.

**Table 7.19 Participants' perceptions of the overall American value, by value**

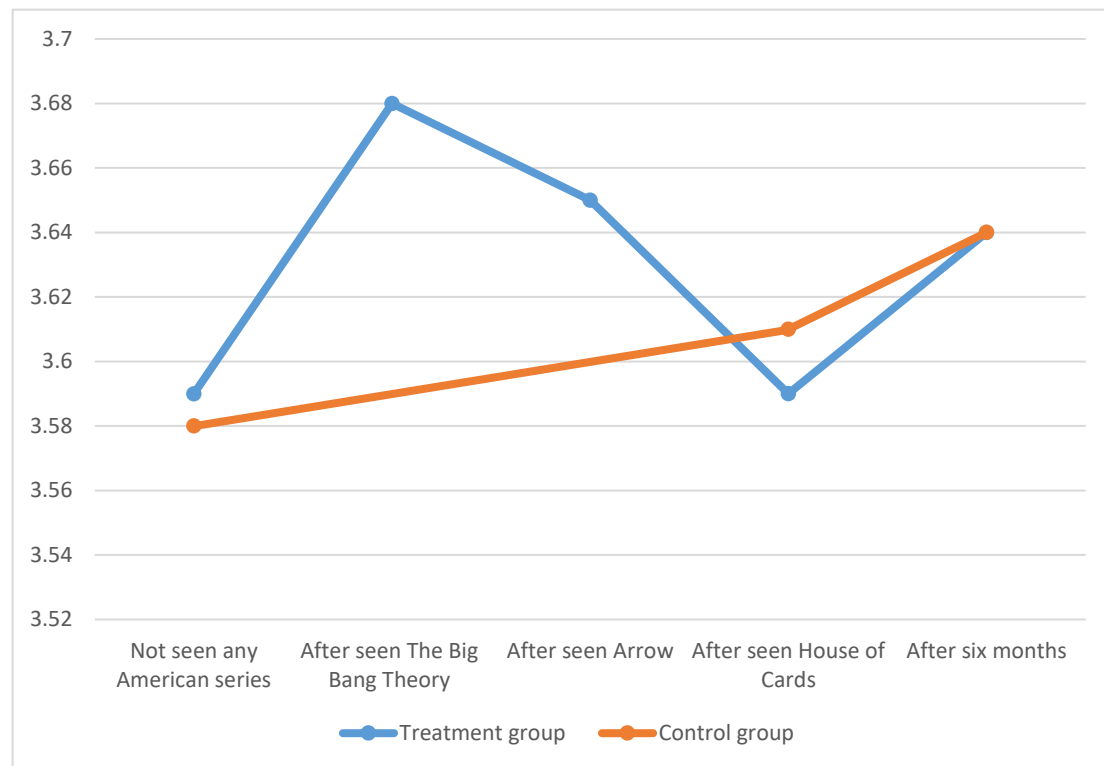
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American series	33	3.59	.52
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.68	.47
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.65	.50
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.59	.53
TG: After six months	32	3.64	.34
CG: Start	32	3.58	.43
CG: End	32	3.61	.47
CG: After six months	31	3.64	.45

**Table 7.20 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the differences in participants' perceptions of the overall American value during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	.00
	CG: End	-.02
	CG: After six months	-.05
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.09
	CG: Start	.09
	CG: End	.06
	CG: After six months	.04
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.06
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	-.02
	CG: Start	.07
	CG: End	.04
	CG: After six months	.02
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	TG: Had not seeing any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.00
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	-.06
	CG: Start	.00
	CG: End	-.02
	CG: After six months	-.05
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American series (beginning of experiment)	.05
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	.05
	CG: Start	.05
	CG: End	.03
	CG: After six months	.00
CG: End	CG: Start	.03
	CG: After six months	-.02
CG: After six months	CG: Start	.05
	CG: End	.02

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.10 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of the overall American value during treatment processes**



## 2. Sexual liberation

When asked whether they agree with sexual liberation, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants are more supportive of sexual liberation. To test the change of participants' attitude to sexual liberation during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards sexual liberation based on experimental process (N=259).

The independent variable experimental process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) (M=2.91, SD=1.10, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=3.18, SD=1.01, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=3.00, SD=1.20, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=3.03, SD=1.26, n=33), and after six months (M=2.97, SD=1.23, n=32); control group- at the beginning of the experiment (M=2.38, SD=.83, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=2.34, SD=.94, n=32), and after six months (M=2.52, SD=.96, n=31). The mean scores show that the Chinese participants'



attitude towards sexual liberation is below neutral (3=neutral) before the experiment. After they had seen the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, their attitude became more positive. Then it dropped back towards neutral after seeing the fantasy series *Arrow*, but rose again after seeing the drama series *House of Cards*, which is above the level in the beginning before they had seen any American TV series. However, the mean score dropped back to neutral after six months. The control group's attitude towards sexual liberation became a little less supportive after the experiment, but rose in the following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.68, p = .12$ . The ANOVA was significant,  $F(7,251) = 2.96; p = .005$ . Therefore, there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is a significant difference attitude to sexual liberation within different experimental processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among groups were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitudes between the treatment group and the control group. People in treatment group and control group have no significant difference in their attitude to sexual liberation at the beginning of the experiment. However, participants in the treatment group were more positive towards sexual liberation after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* compared with the control group at the end of the experiment. To determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing data obtained in each process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The result shows there was no significant difference in the scores for treatment group in the treatment processes compared with the score at the beginning of the experiment.

**Table 7.21 Participants' perceptions of sexual liberation, by groups**

	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	2.91	1.10
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.18	1.01
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.00	1.20
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.03	1.26
TG: After six months	32	2.97	1.23
CG: Start	32	2.38	.83

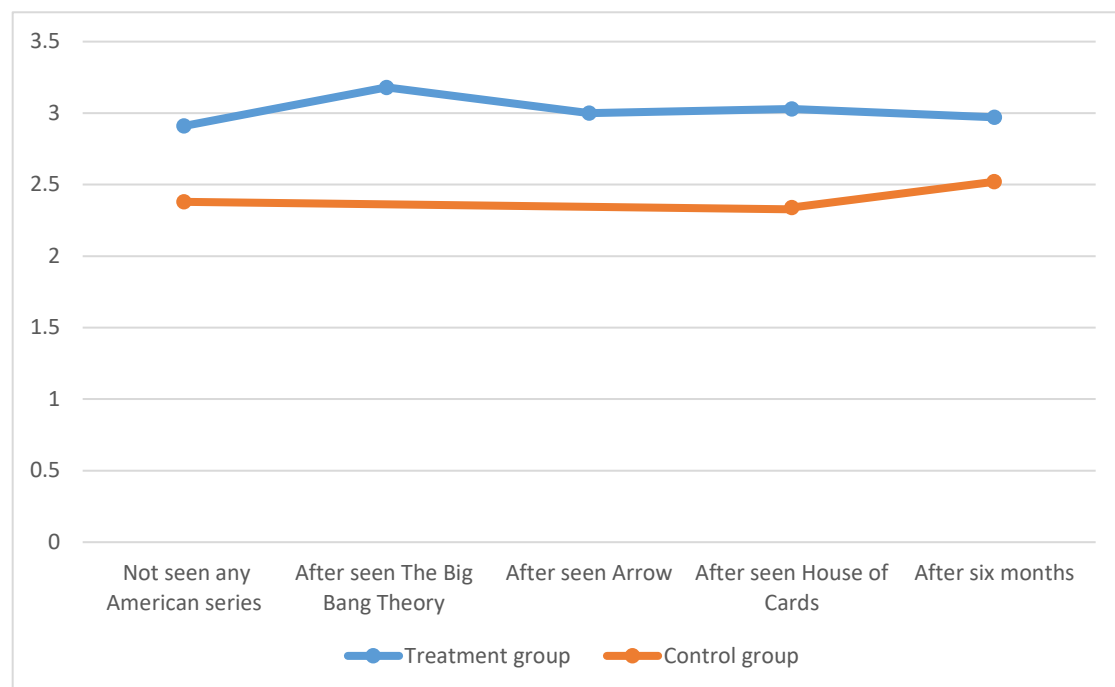
CG: End	32	2.34	.94
CG: After six months	31	2.52	.96

**Table 7.22 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' perceptions of sexual liberation during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
<b>TG: Had not seen any American TV series</b>	CG: Start	.53
	CG: End	.56
	CG: After six months	.39
<b>TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	.27
	CG: Start	.81
	CG: End	.83*
	CG: After six months	.67
<b>TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	.09
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	-.18
	CG: Start	.63
	CG: End	.66
	CG: After six months	.48
<b>TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	.12
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	.03
	CG: Start	.66
	CG: End	.69
	CG: After six months	.51
<b>TG: After six months</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	.06
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	-.06
	CG: Start	.59
	CG: End	.63
	CG: After six months	.45
<b>CG: End</b>	CG: Start	-.03
	CG: After six months	-.17
<b>CG: After six months</b>	CG: Start	.14
	CG: End	.17

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.11 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of sexual liberation during treatment processes**



### 3. Competition

When asked whether they agree with competition, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants are more supportive of competition. To test the change in participants' attitudes to competition during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards competition based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) (M=3.91, SD=.77, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=3.85, SD=.80, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=3.85, SD=.80, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=3.76, SD=.97, n=33), and after six months (M=3.78, SD=.71, n=32); control group- at the beginning of the experiment (M=4.03, SD=.82, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=4.09, SD=.78, n=32), and after six months (M=3.74, SD=.89, n=31). The mean score shows that the Chinese audiences' attitude was less favourable regarding competition after seeing the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, was unchanged after watching the fantasy series *Arrow*, but continue to drop after seeing the drama series

*House of Cards*. On the contrary, the control group's favouring of competition rose a little during the experiment.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.25, p = .28$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7,251) = .78, p = .60$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in the audiences' attitude to competition within different experimental processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitudes towards treatment group and control groups during treatment. To determine the changes during treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was no significant difference in the scores for the treatment group in each process.

**Table 7.23 Participants' perceptions of competition, by groups**

	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.91	.77
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.85	.80
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.85	.80
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.76	.97
TG: After six months	32	3.78	.71
CG: Start	32	4.03	.82
CG: End	32	4.09	.78
CG: After six months	31	3.74	.89

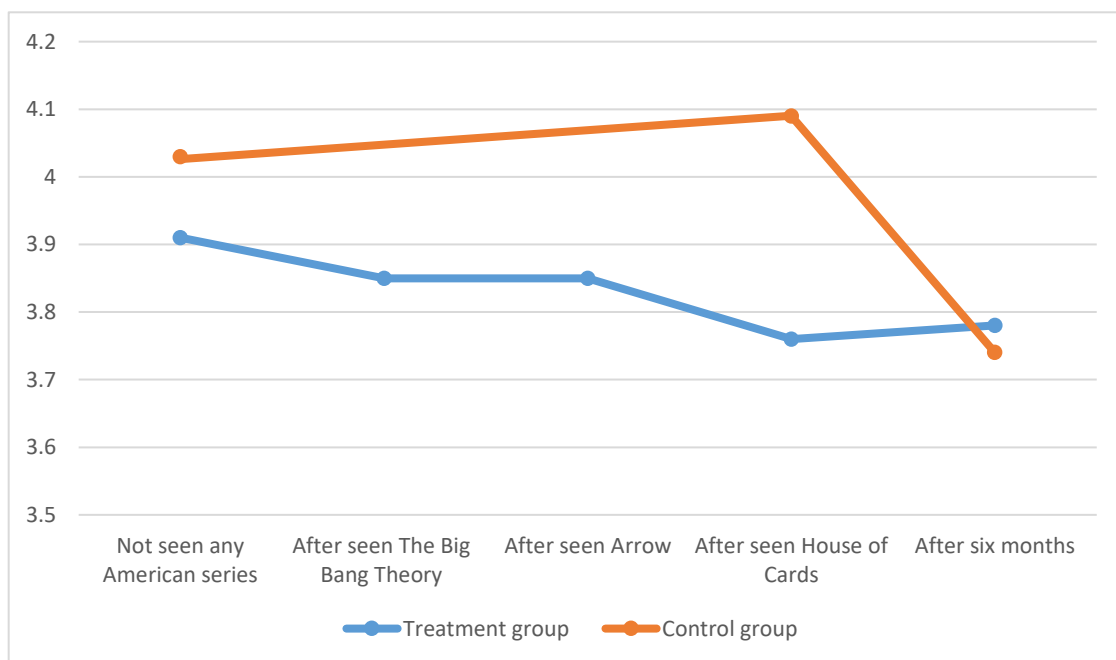
**Table 7.24 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' perceptions of competition during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	-.12
	CG: End	-.18
	CG: After six months	.17
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	-.06

	CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.18 -.25 .11
<b>TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.06 .00 -.18 -.25 .11
<b>TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.15 -.09 -.27 -.34 .02
<b>TG: After six months</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment) CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.13 .02 -.25 -.31 .04
<b>CG: End</b>	CG: Start CG: After six months	.06 .35
<b>CG: After six months</b>	CG: Start CG: End	-.29 -.35

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.12 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of competition during treatment processes**



#### 4. Modernity

When asked whether they agree with modernity, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants are more supportive of modernity. To test the change in participants' attitudes to modernity during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards modernity based on experimental process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) (M=3.85, SD=.62, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=3.85, SD=1.00, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=4.06, SD=.66, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=3.85, SD=1.03, n=33), and after six months (M=3.81, SD=.82, n=32); control group- at the beginning of the experiment (M=4.09, SD=.82, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=4.25, SD=.57, n=32), and after six months (M=4.10, SD=.60, n=31). The mean scores show that the Chinese audiences' favouring of modernity was unchanged after watching the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, then rose a little after watching the fantasy series *Arrow*, but dropped to the original level after seeing drama series *House of Cards*.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 3.12, p=.004$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7,251) = 1.39, p=.21$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in the attitude to competition within different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences in the mean scores of attitude towards modernity between the treatment group and the control group during treatment. To determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was no significant difference in the scores for the treatment group in each process.

**Table 7.25 Participants' perception of modernity, by groups**

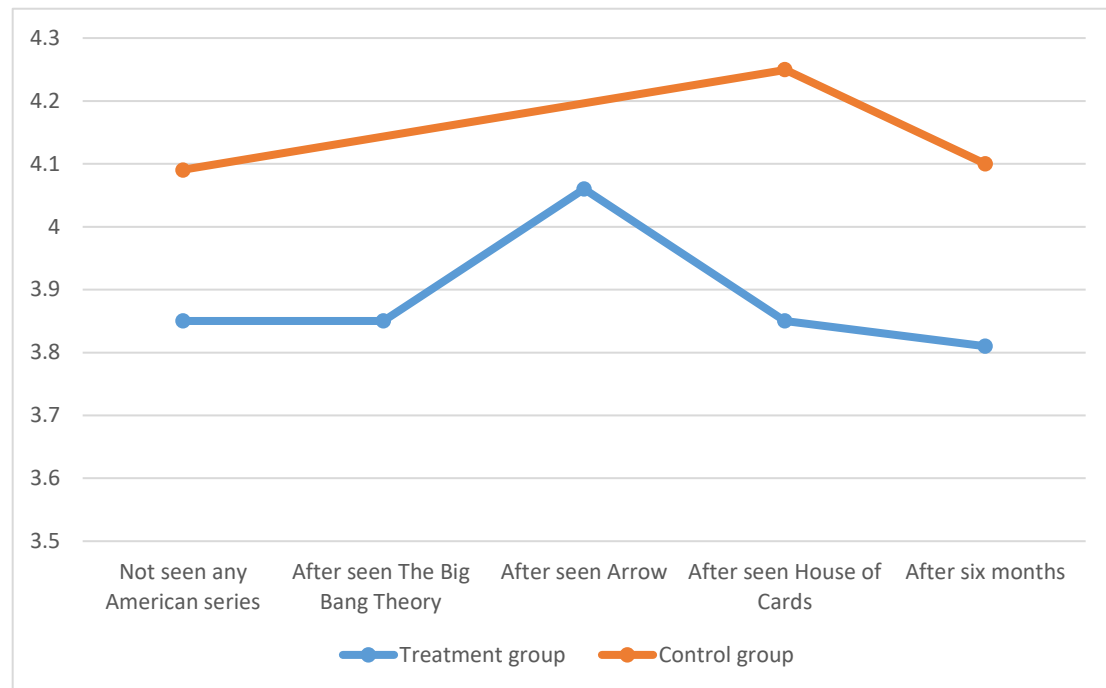
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.85	.62
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.85	1.00
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	4.06	.66
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.85	1.03
TG: After six months	32	3.81	.82
CG: Start	32	4.09	.82
CG: End	32	4.25	.57
CG: After six months	31	4.10	.60

**Table 7.26 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' perceptions of modernity during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	-.25
	CG: End	-.40
	CG: After six months	-.25
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American series (start of experiment)	.00
	CG: Start	-.25
	CG: End	-.40
	CG: After six months	-.25
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American series (start of experiment)	.21
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	.21
	CG: Start	-.03
	CG: End	-.19
	CG: After six months	-.04
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	TG: Had not seen any American series (start of experiment)	.00
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	-.21
	CG: Start	-.25
	CG: End	-.40
	CG: After six months	-.25
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American series (start of experiment)	-.04
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	-.04
	CG: Start	-.28
	CG: End	-.44
	CG: After six months	-.28
CG: End	CG: Start	.16
	CG: After six months	.15
CG: After six months	CG: Start	.00
	CG: End	-.15

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.13 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of modernity during treatment processes**



## 5. Individual orientation

When asked whether they agree with individual orientation, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means that the participants are more supportive of individual orientation. To test the change of the participants' attitude to individual orientation during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards individual orientation based on treatment process ( $N=259$ ).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) ( $M=3.76$ ,  $SD=1.00$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* ( $M=4.12$ ,  $SD=.70$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *Arrow* ( $M=3.94$ ,  $SD=.86$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) ( $M=4.00$ ,  $SD=.90$ ,  $n=33$ ), and after six months ( $M=4.06$ ,  $SD=.67$ ,  $n=32$ ); control group- at the beginning of the experiment ( $M=4.16$ ,  $SD=.63$ ,  $n=32$ ), at the end of the experiment ( $M=4.19$ ,  $SD=.54$ ,  $n=32$ ), and after six months ( $M=4.13$ ,  $SD=.62$ ,  $n=31$ ). The mean scores show that the Chinese audiences' favouring of individual orientation rose quickly after they watching the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, and then dropped after they had seen the fantasy series *Arrow*, but rose a little bit after watching the



drama series *House of Cards* and the following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 2.10$ ,  $p = .04$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7,251) = 1.15$ ,  $p = .33$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference attitude to competition within different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among groups were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitude towards individual orientation between the treatment group and the control group during treatment. To determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was a significant difference in the scores for the treatment group after the process of seeing *The Big Bang Theory*,  $t(32) = 3.20$ ,  $p = .003$ . This means the Chinese audiences became more supportive of individualism after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* compared with the data in the beginning of the experiment.

**Table 7.27 Participants' perceptions of individual orientation, by groups**

	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.76	1.00
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	4.12	.70
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.94	.86
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	4.00	.90
TG: After six months	32	4.06	.67
CG: Start	32	4.16	.63
CG: End	32	4.19	.54
CG: After six months	31	4.13	.62

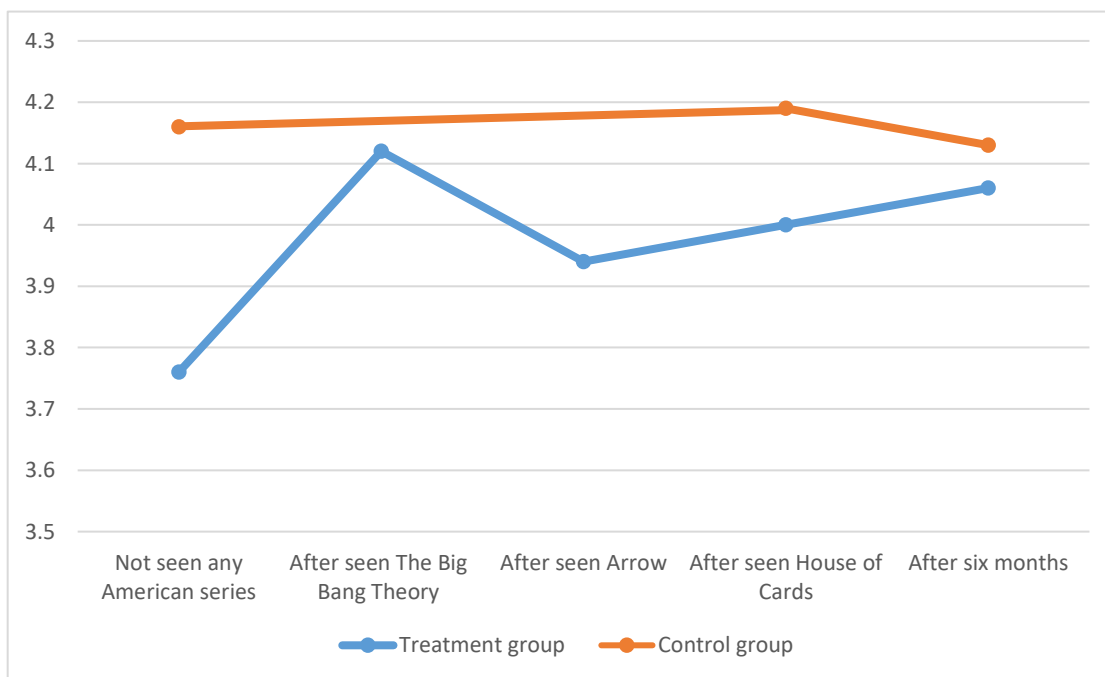
**Table 7.28 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' perceptions of individual orientation during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	-.40
	CG: End	-.43
	CG: After six months	-.37

<b>TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.36 -.04 -.07 -.01
<b>TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.18 -.18 -.22 -.25 -.19
<b>TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.24 .06 -.16 -.19 -.13
<b>TG: After six months</b>	TG: Had not seen any American series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.30 .06 -.09 -.13 -.07
<b>CG: End</b>	CG: Start CG: After six months	.03 .06
<b>CG: After six months</b>	CG: Start CG: End	-.03 -.06

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.14 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of individual orientation during treatment processes**



## 6. Leisure

When asked whether they agree with leisure, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants are more supportive of leisure. To test the change of participants' attitudes to leisure during treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards leisure based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) (M=3.67, SD=.89, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=3.72, SD=.91, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=3.67, SD=1.05, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=3.58, SD=1.00, n=33), and after six months (M=3.63, SD=.91, n=32); control group- at the beginning of the experiment (M=3.41, SD=.63, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=3.56, SD=.76, n=32), and after six months (M=3.81, SD=.75, n=31). The mean scores show that the Chinese audiences' favourable attitude to leisure rose a little bit after seeing comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, but dropped after watching fantasy series *Arrow* and the drama series *House of Cards*, then rose during the following six months. On the contrary, the control group's attitude to leisure became a little more positive during the experiment.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.29$ ,  $p = .25$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7,251) = .57$ ,  $p = .78$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in the participants' attitudes to leisure within different experimental processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitudes towards leisure between the treatment group and the control group during treatment. To determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show that there was no significant difference in the scores for the treatment group in each process.

**Table 7.29 Participants' perceptions of leisure, by groups**

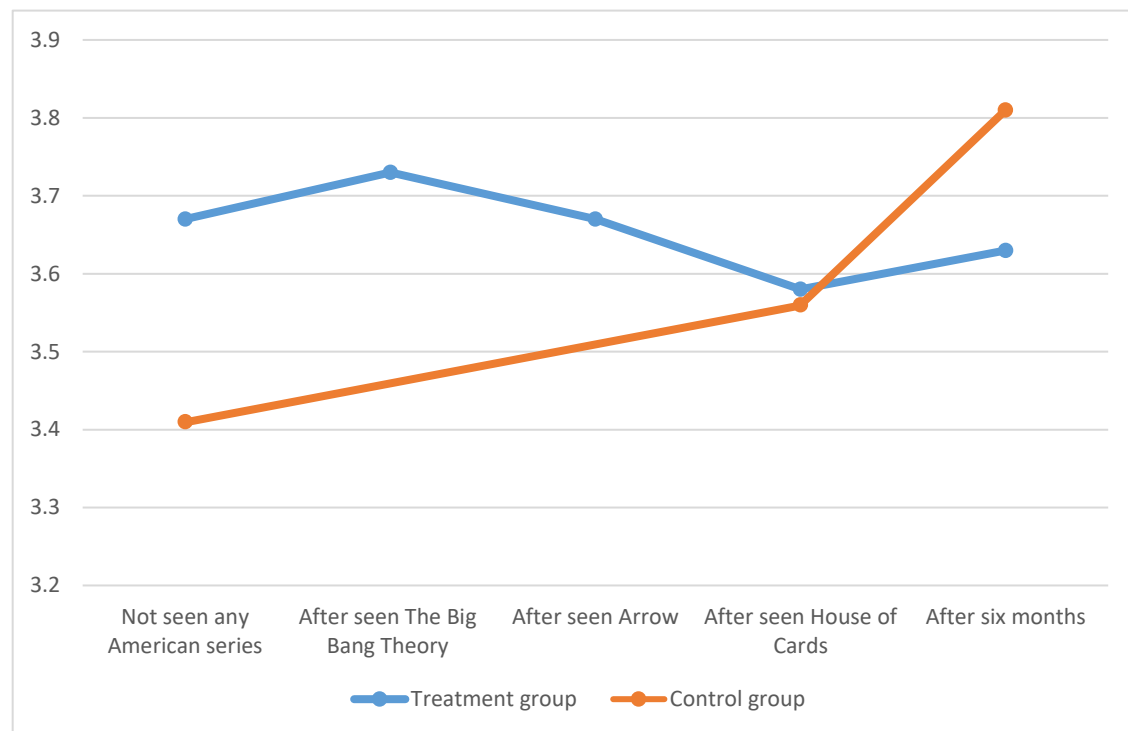
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.67	.89
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.73	.91
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.67	1.05
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.58	1.00
TG: After six months	32	3.63	.91
CG: Start	32	3.41	.87
CG: End	32	3.56	.76
CG: After six months	31	3.81	.75

**Table 7.30 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' perceptions of leisure during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	.26
	CG: End	.10
	CG: After six months	-.14
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.06
	CG: Start	.32
	CG: End	.16
	CG: After six months	-.08
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.00
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	-.06
	CG: Start	.26
	CG: End	.10
	CG: After six months	-.14
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.09
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	-.09
	CG: Start	.17
	CG: End	.01
	CG: After six months	-.23
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.04
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	.05
	CG: Start	.22
	CG: End	.06
	CG: After six months	-.18
CG: End	CG: Start	.16
	CG: After six months	-.24
CG: After six months	CG: Start	.40
	CG: End	.24

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.15 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of leisure during treatment processes**



## 7. Equality

When asked whether they agree with equality, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants are more supportive of equality. To test the change of participants' attitude to equality during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards equality based on treatment process ( $N=259$ ).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) ( $M=3.55$ ,  $SD=1.00$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* ( $M=3.55$ ,  $SD=.90$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *Arrow* ( $M=3.55$ ,  $SD=.90$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) ( $M=3.45$ ,  $SD=1.00$ ,  $n=33$ ), and after six months ( $M=3.47$ ,  $SD=.84$ ,  $n=32$ ); control group- at the beginning of the experiment ( $M=3.41$ ,  $SD=.71$ ,  $n=32$ ), at the end of the experiment ( $M=3.38$ ,  $SD=.55$ ,  $n=32$ ), and after six months ( $M=3.48$ ,  $SD=.77$ ,  $n=31$ ). The mean scores show that the Chinese audiences' favourable attitude to equality was unchanged after they watched the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory* and

the fantasy series *Arrow*, but dropped quickly after seeing the drama series *House of Cards*. However, the participants in the control groups were slight less supportive of equality after the experiment.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7, 251) = 2.81, p = .008$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7, 251) = .19, p = .99$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference attitude to equality within different experimental processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitude towards treatment group and control groups during treatment. To determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show that there was no significant difference in the scores for the treatment group in each process.

**Table 7.31 Participants' perceptions of equality, by groups**

	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.55	1.00
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.55	.90
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.55	.90
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.45	1.00
TG: After six months	32	3.47	.84
CG: Start	32	3.41	.71
CG: End	32	3.38	.55
CG: After six months	31	3.48	.77

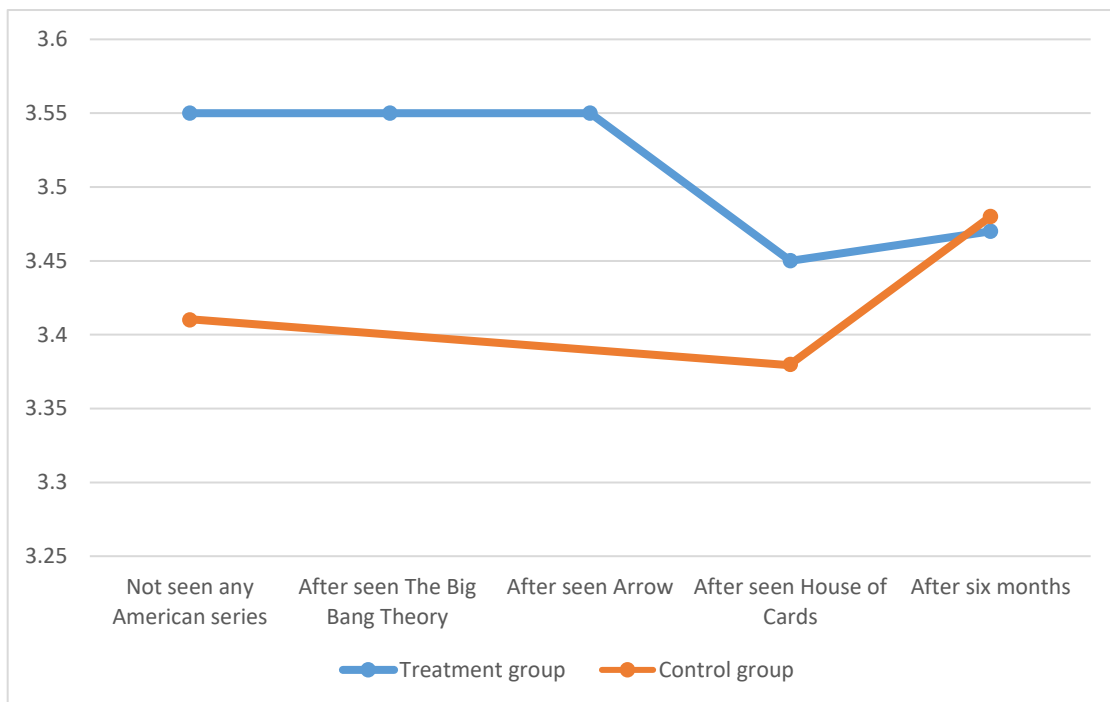
**Table 7.32 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' perceptions of equality during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	.14
	CG: End	.17
	CG: After six months	.06
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	

	CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.00 .14 .17 .06
<b>TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.00 .00 .14 .17 .06
<b>TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.09 -.09 .05 .08 -.03
<b>TG: After six months</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment) CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.08 .01 .06 .09 -.02
<b>CG: End</b>	CG: Start CG: After six months	-.03 -.11
<b>CG: After six months</b>	CG: Start CG: End	.08 .11

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.16 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of equality during treatment processes**



## 8. Adventurousness

When asked whether they agree with adventurous, the participants used a 5-point Likert scale to answer the question; '1' stands for strongly disagree and '5' stands for strongly agree. The higher value means the participants are more supportive of adventurousness. To test the change of participants' attitudes to adventurousness during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards adventurous based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- not seen any American series (at the beginning of the experiment) (M=3.48, SD=1.00, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=3.45, SD=1.06, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=3.52, SD=1.00, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=3.45, SD=1.00, n=33), and after six months (M=3.75, SD= .88, n=32); control group- at the beginning of the experiment (M=3.63, SD=.75, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=3.47, SD=.88, n=32), and after six months (M=3.68, SD= .94, n=31). The mean scores show that the audiences' positive attitude to adventurousness fell a little after they had seen the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, then rose after watching the fantasy series *Arrow*, but dropped again after seeing the drama series *House of Cards*, and rose again during the following six months. However, the results from the participants in the control group shows a drop in their support for adventurousness during the experiment, followed by a rise in support after six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.00$ ,  $p = .43$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7,251) = .47$ ,  $p = .86$ . Therefore, there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in attitudes to adventurousness within the different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among groups were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences between the mean scores of attitude towards adventurousness between the treatment group and the control group during treatment. To determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each treatment process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was no significant difference in the scores for treatment group in each process.



**Table 7.33 Participants' perception of adventurousness, by groups**

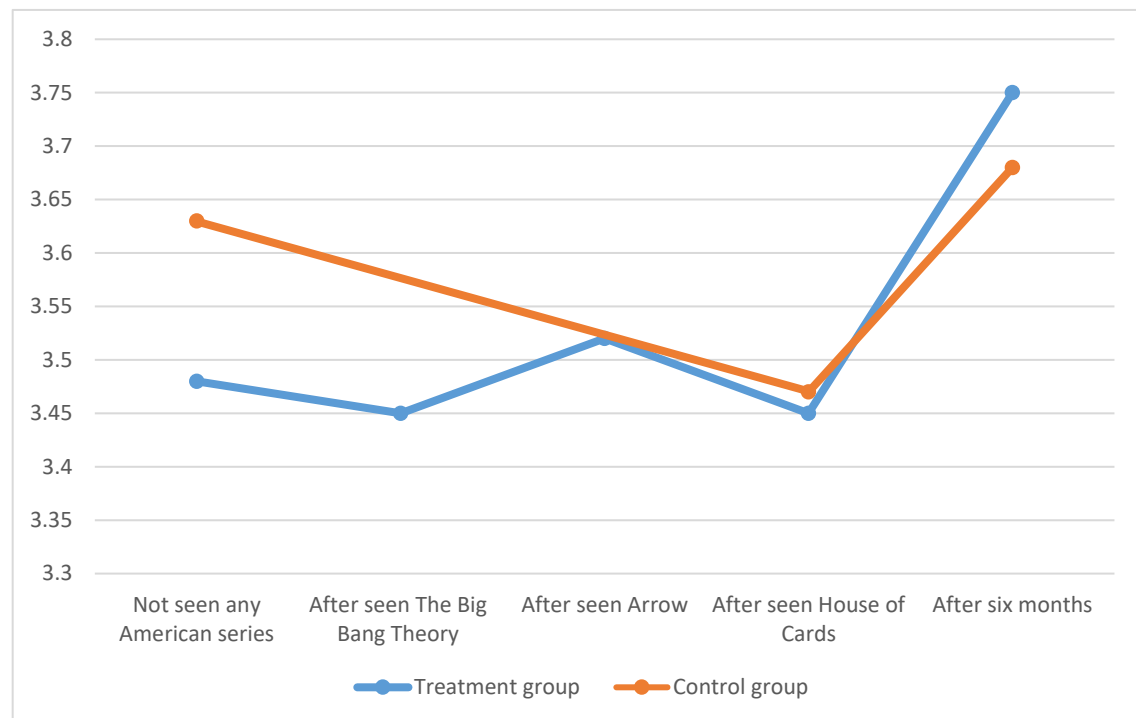
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.48	1.00
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.45	1.06
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.52	1.00
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.45	1.00
TG: After six months	32	3.75	.88
CG: Start	32	3.63	.75
CG: End	32	3.47	.88
CG: After six months	31	3.68	.94

**Table 7.34 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' perceptions of adventurousness during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	-.14
	CG: End	.02
	CG: After six months	-.19
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.03
	CG: Start	-.17
	CG: End	-.01
	CG: After six months	-.22
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.03
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	.06
	CG: Start	-.11
	CG: End	.05
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	CG: After six months	-.16
	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.03
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	-.06
	CG: Start	-.17
TG: After six months	CG: End	.01
	CG: After six months	-.22
	TG: Had not seen any American series (beginning of experiment)	.27
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	.30
CG: End	CG: Start	.13
	CG: End	.28
	CG: After six months	.07
CG: After six months	CG: Start	-.16
	CG: End	-.21
CG: After six months	CG: Start	.05
	CG: End	.21

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.17 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of adventurousness during treatment processes**



#### **7.2.4 The impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences' perceptions of Chinese reality**

The audiences' perceptions of their own reality is an important potential area that could be impacted after viewing American TV series. The audiences' perceptions of Chinese reality are based on the viewers' own lives and their perceptions of their own culture, which could be an indicator of impact on their cultural identity (Potter 1986; Sirgy et al. 1998). The experiment was to explore whether watching American TV series influences Chinese audiences' perceptions of Chinese reality.

##### **1. Satisfaction with the Chinese economy**

When asked whether participants are satisfied with the Chinese economy, the participants used a 10-Likert scale with '1' indicating "not at all satisfied" and '10' indicating "very much satisfied". The higher value means the participants are more satisfied with the Chinese economy. To test the changes of the participants' satisfaction with the Chinese economy during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards sexual liberation based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) ( $M=5.67$ ,  $SD=1.49$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* ( $M=5.52$ ,  $SD=1.68$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *Arrow* ( $M=5.88$ ,  $SD=1.75$ ,  $n=33$ ), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) ( $M=5.85$ ,  $SD=1.54$ ,  $n=33$ ), and after six months ( $M=6.06$ ,  $SD=1.68$ ,  $n=32$ ); the control group- at the beginning of the experiment ( $M=6.38$ ,  $SD=1.90$ ,  $n=32$ ), at the end of the experiment ( $M=5.99$ ,  $SD=1.74$ ,  $n=32$ ), and after six months ( $M=7.10$ ,  $SD=1.78$ ,  $n=32$ ). The mean scores show that Chinese audiences' satisfaction with the Chinese economy dropped a little after watching the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, then rose after watching the fantasy series *Arrow*, then dropped after seeing the drama series *House of Cards*, but rose again during the following six months. On the contrary, the control group's satisfaction with the Chinese economy rose a little after the experiment and the following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = .33$ ,  $p=.94$ . The ANOVA was significant;  $F(7,251) = 3.16$ ,  $p=.003$ . Therefore, there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is a significant difference in satisfaction with the Chinese economy within different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences in the mean scores of attitude towards satisfaction with the Chinese economy between treatment group and control group during experiment. But comparison of the data from the control group six months after the experiment, the data from the treatment group at the beginning of the experiment and after watching *The Big Bang Theory* are statistically different. This difference did not exist six months after the experiment. To determine the changes during each treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was no significant difference in the scores for the treatment group in the processes.

**Table 7.35 Participants' satisfaction with the Chinese economy, by groups**

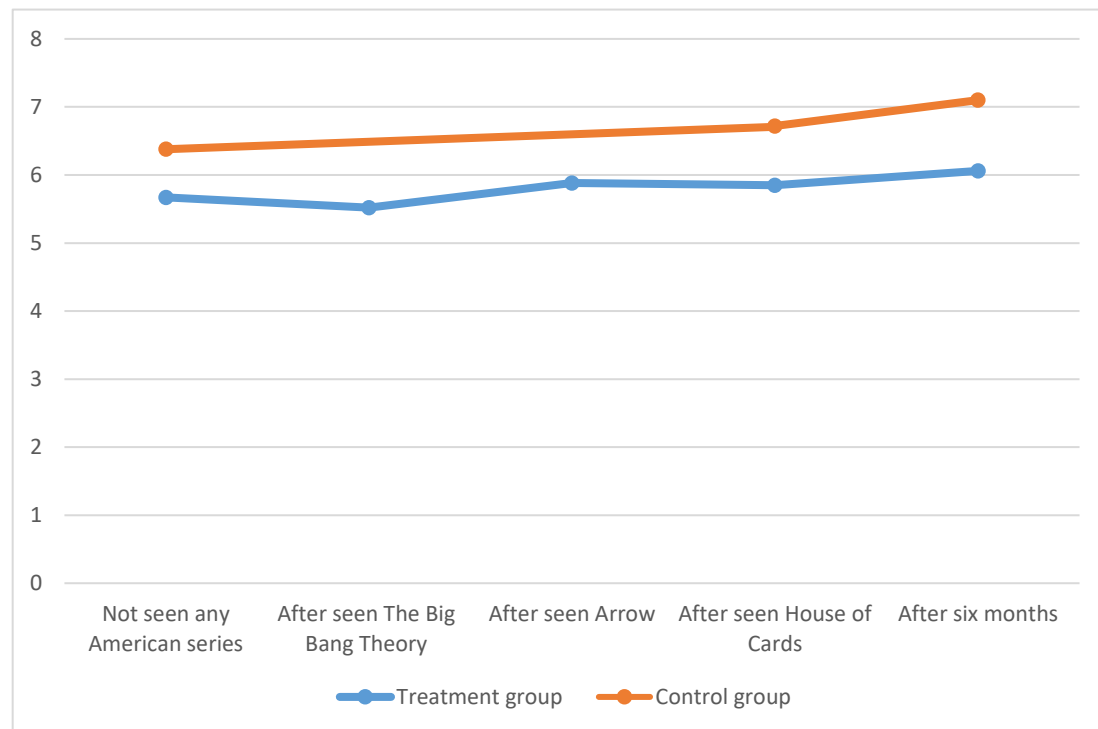
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	5.67	1.49
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	5.52	1.68
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	5.88	1.75
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	5.85	1.54
TG: After six months	32	6.06	1.68
CG: Start	32	6.38	1.90
CG: End	32	6.72	1.74
CG: After six months	31	7.10	1.78

**Table 7.36 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' satisfaction with the Chinese economy during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	-.71
	CG: End	-1.05
	CG: After six months	-1.43*
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	-.15
	CG: Start	-.86
	CG: End	-1.20
	CG: After six months	-1.58*
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	.21
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	.36
	CG: Start	-.50
	CG: End	-.84
	CG: After six months	-1.22
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	.18
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	-.03
	CG: Start	-.53
	CG: End	-.87
	CG: After six months	-1.25
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment)	.40
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	.21
	CG: Start	-.31
	CG: End	-.66
	CG: After six months	-1.03
CG: End	CG: Start	.34
	CG: After six months	-.38
CG: After six months	CG: Start	.72
	CG: End	.38

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.18 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' satisfaction with the Chinese economy during treatment processes**



## 2. Satisfaction with Chinese society

When asked whether participants are satisfied with the Chinese social environment, the participants used a 10-point Likert scale with '1' indicating "not at all satisfied" and '10' indicating "very much satisfied". The higher value means the participants are more satisfied with Chinese society. To test the change of participants' satisfaction with Chinese society during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in attitude towards sexual liberation based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) (M=5.00, SD=1.62, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=5.15, SD=1.42, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=5.73, SD=1.79, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=5.58, SD=1.92, n=33), and after six months (M=6.13, SD=2.06, n=32); the control group- at the beginning of the experiment (M=6.03, SD=2.07, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=6.78, SD=1.98, n=32), and after six months (M=6.00, SD=2.13, n=31). The mean scores show that Chinese audiences'

satisfaction with Chinese society rose after watching the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory* and the fantasy series *Arrow*, but dropped a little after seeing the drama series *House of Cards*.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.18, p = .32$ . The ANOVA was significant;  $F(7,251) = 2.91, p = .006$ . Therefore, there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is a significant difference in the attitude to satisfaction with Chinese society within different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed significant pairwise differences in the mean scores of attitude to satisfaction with Chinese society between the treatment group and the control groups. Compared to the data of the control group at the end of the experiment, the participants in the treatment group shows a statistically significant difference in the process of not seeing any American TV series and after seeing *The Big Bang Theory*, but this difference not exist at the end of the experiment. To determine the changes during treatment process by comparing the data obtained in each process with the data obtained at the beginning of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was a significant difference in the scores for the treatment group after seeing *Arrow* ( $M = 5.73, SD = 1.79$ ),  $t(32) = 2.90, p = .007$ ; after six months,  $t(31.80) = 2.98, p = .005$ . This means participants in the treatment group became more satisfied with the Chinese social environment after they had seen *Arrow* compared with when they had seen other American TV series.

**Table 7.37 Participants' satisfaction with the Chinese society, by groups**

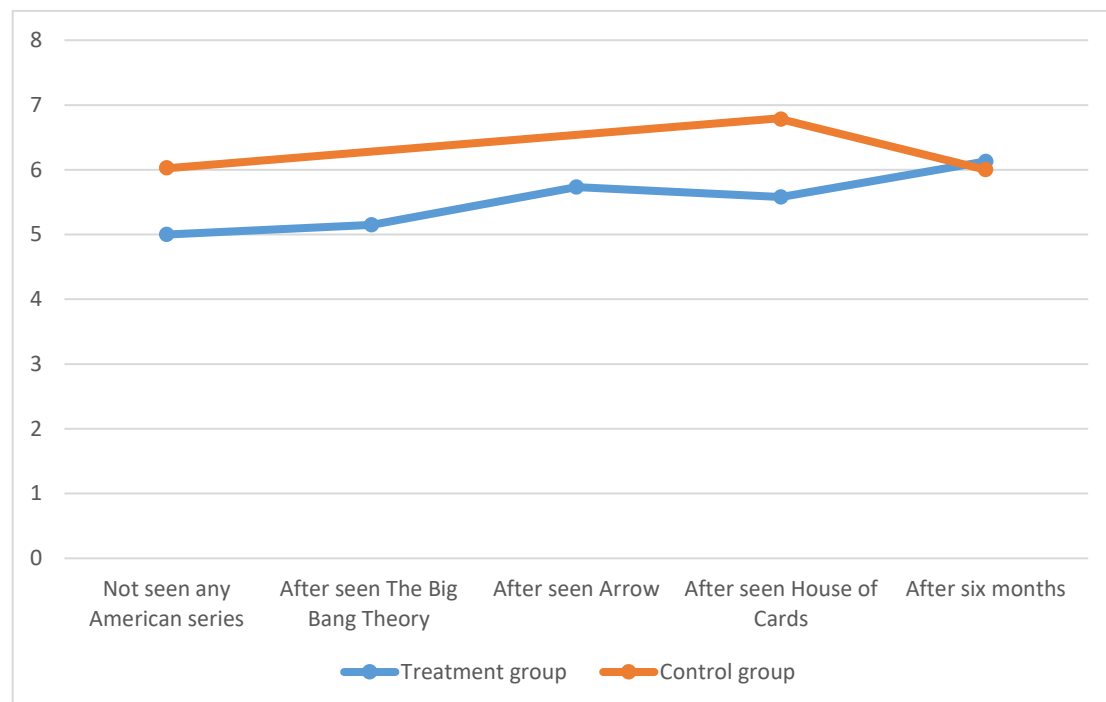
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	5.00	1.62
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	5.15	1.42
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	5.73	1.79
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	5.58	1.92
TG: After six months	32	6.13	2.06
CG: Start	32	6.03	2.07
CG: End	32	6.78	1.98
CG: After six months	31	6.00	2.13

**Table 7.38 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' satisfaction with the Chinese society during different treatment processes**

<b>Treatment/Control group</b>	<b>Comparison group</b>	<b>Mean difference</b>
<b>TG: Had not seen any American TV series</b>	CG: Start	-1.03
	CG: End	-1.78 <sup>*</sup>
	CG: After six months	-1.00
<b>TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.15
	CG: Start	-.88
	CG: End	-1.60 <sup>*</sup>
	CG: After six months	-.85
<b>TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.73
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	.58
	CG: Start	-.30
	CG: End	-1.05
	CG: After six months	-.27
<b>TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.58
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	-.15
	CG: Start	-.46
	CG: End	-1.17
	CG: After six months	-.42
<b>TG: After six months</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	1.13
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	.55
	CG: Start	.09
	CG: End	-.63
	CG: After six months	.13
<b>CG: End</b>	CG: Start	.72
	CG: After six months	.75
<b>CG: After six months</b>	CG: Start	-.03
	CG: End	-.75

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.19 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' satisfaction with the Chinese society during treatment processes**



### 3. Satisfaction with Chinese culture

When asked whether participants are satisfied with the Chinese cultural environment, the participants used a 10-point Likert scale with '1' indicating not at all satisfied and '10' indicating "very much satisfied". The higher value means the more satisfied with Chinese culture. To test the changes in the participants' satisfaction with Chinese culture during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in satisfaction with the Chinese cultural environment based on treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) (M=6.12, SD=1.83, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=5.76, SD=1.97, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=5.85, SD=2.02, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=5.55, SD=2.40, n=33), and after six months (M=6.28, SD=2.30, n=32); the control group: at the beginning of the experiment (M=6.63, SD=1.86, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=6.94, SD=1.48, n=32), and after six months (M=7.00, SD=2.16, n=31). The mean scores show that the Chinese audiences' satisfaction with the cultural environment dropped after watching the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, then rose a little after seeing the fantasy series *Arrow*, then dropped again after seeing the



drama series *House of Cards*, but rose again during the following six months. On the contrary, the control group's satisfaction with Chinese culture rose a little bit during the experiment and the following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = 1.64, p = .13$ . The ANOVA was significant;  $F(7,251) = 2.36, p = .024$ . Therefore, there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the conclusion is that there is a significant difference attitude to satisfaction with the Chinese culture within the different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among group means were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences in the mean scores of attitude towards satisfaction with the Chinese culture between the treatment group and the control group during treatment. To determine the changes during treatment process by comparing data obtained in each process with the data obtained at the start of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was no significant difference in the scores for the treatment group in the processes.

**Table 7.39 Participants' satisfaction with Chinese culture, by groups**

	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	6.12	1.83
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	5.76	1.97
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	5.85	2.02
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	5.55	2.40
TG: After six months	32	6.28	2.30
CG: Start	32	6.63	1.86
CG: End	32	6.94	1.48
CG: After six months	31	7.00	2.16

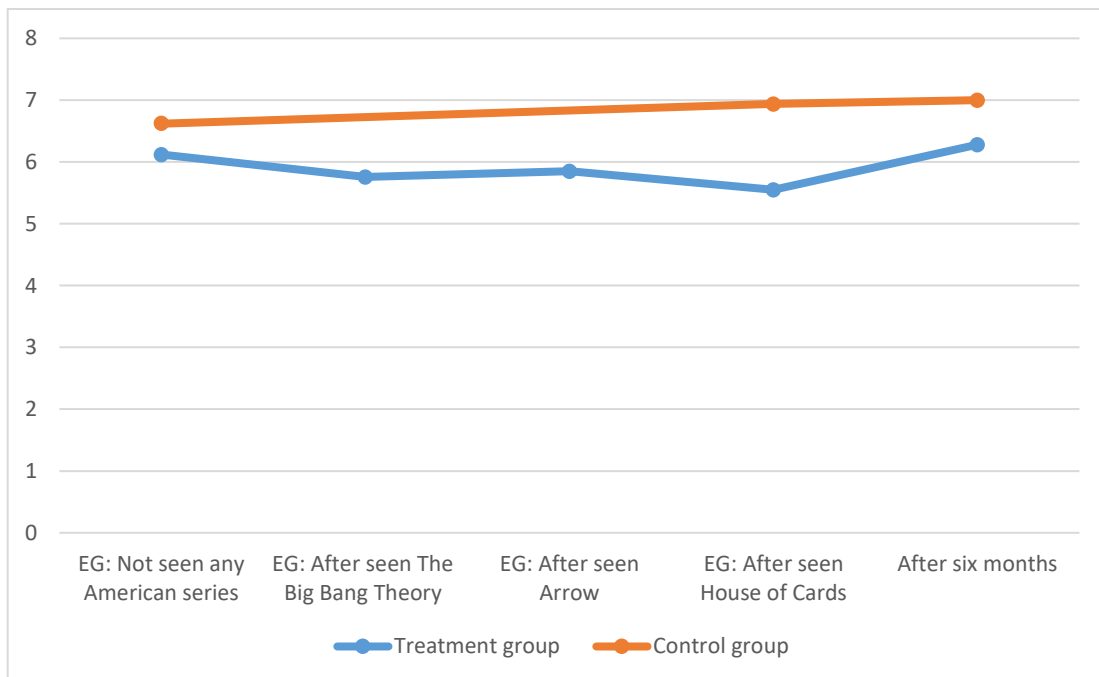
**Table 7.40 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' satisfaction with the Chinese culture during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	-.50
	CG: End	-.88
	CG: After six months	-.88
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) CG: Start	-.36

	CG: End CG: After six months	-.87 -1.24 -1.24
<b>TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i></b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.27 .09 -.78 -1.15 -1.15
<b>TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i> CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	-.58 -.30 -1.08 -1.39 -1.45
<b>TG: After six months</b>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (start of experiment) TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment) CG: Start CG: End CG: After six months	.16 .74 -.34 -.66 -.72
<b>CG: End</b>	CG: Start CG: After six months	.31 -.06
<b>CG: After six months</b>	CG: Start CG: End	.38 .06

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.20 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' satisfaction with Chinese culture during treatment processes**



#### 4. Chinese self-esteem

When asked whether participants agree with the statement 'I am proud of being Chinese', the participants used a 10-point Likert scale with '1' indicating "not at all satisfied" and '10' indicating "very much satisfied". The higher value means the Chinese self-esteem is stronger. To test the change in participants' self-esteem during the treatment process, a mixed model analysis of variance with one fixed factor was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in Chinese self-esteem based on the treatment process (N=259).

The independent variable treatment process included two groups and eight stages: the treatment group- had not seen any American TV series (at the beginning of the experiment) (M=7.82, SD=1.74, n=33), after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* (M=7.48, SD=2.12, n=33), after seeing *Arrow* (M=7.55, SD=2.14, n=33), after seeing *House of Cards* (at the end of the experiment) (M=7.58, SD=2.39, n=33), and after six months (M=8.22, SD=2.07, n=32); the control group: at the beginning of the experiment (M=8.34, SD=1.86, n=32), at the end of the experiment (M=8.16, SD=2.11, n=32), and after six months (M=8.77, SD=1.86, n=31). The Chinese audiences' self-esteem dropped a little after they had seen the comedy series *The Big Bang Theory*, then their self-esteem rose after watching the fantasy series *Arrow* and the drama series *House of Cards*, and during the following six months. However, the participants in the control group showed a drop in their self-esteem during the experiment, but their self-esteem rose during the following six months.

The assumption of normality was evaluated using histograms and found tenable for all groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable using Levene's Test;  $F(7,251) = .73, p = .65$ . The ANOVA was not significant;  $F(7,251) = 1.60, p = .14$ . Thus there is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis and therefore the conclusion is that there is a significant difference in Chinese self-esteem within the different treatment processes.

Post hoc comparisons to evaluate pairwise differences among groups were conducted using Tukey's HSD test since equal variances were tenable. Tests revealed no significant pairwise differences in the mean scores of Chinese self-esteem between the treatment group and the control group during treatment. To determine the changes during treatment process by comparing data obtained in each process with the data obtained at the start of the experiment, a repeated measures analysis using mixed models was conducted. The results show there was no significant difference in the scores for the treatment group in each process.

**Table 7.41 Chinese participants' self-esteem, by groups**

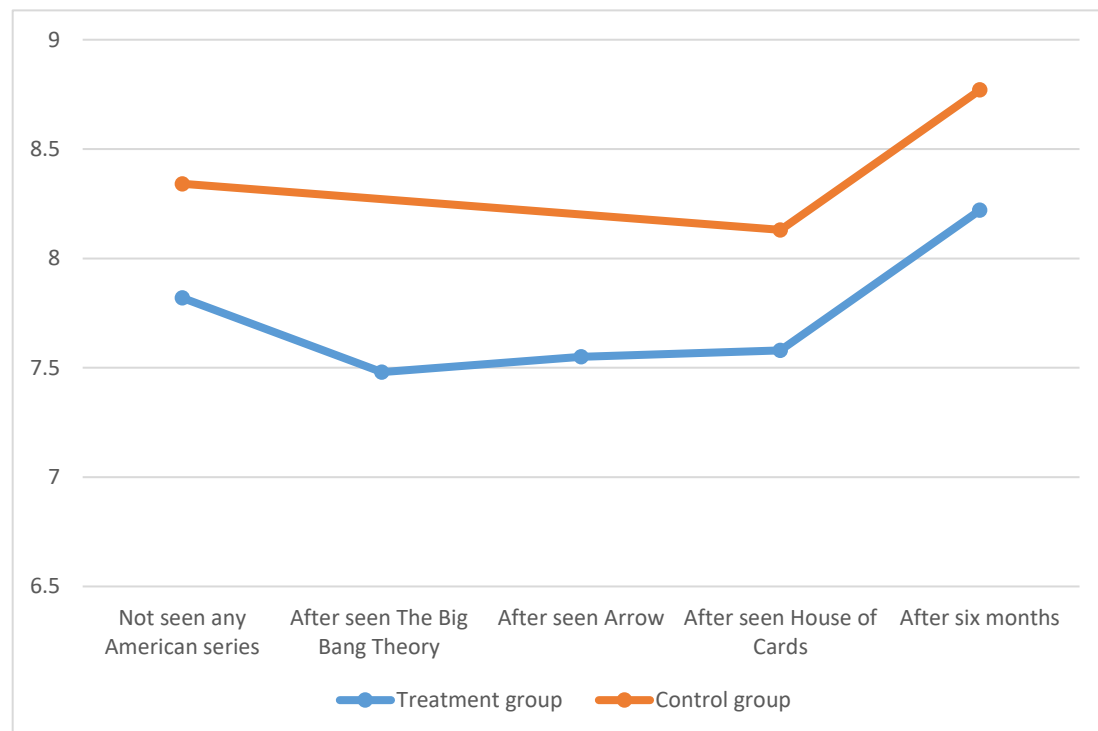
	N	Mean	SD
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	7.82	1.74
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	7.48	2.12
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	7.55	2.14
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	7.58	2.39
TG: After six months	32	8.22	2.07
CG: Start	32	8.34	1.86
CG: End	32	8.13	2.09
CG: After six months	31	8.77	1.86

**Table 7.42 Results of Tukey's HSD test on the difference in participants' self-esteem during different treatment processes**

Treatment/Control group	Comparison group	Mean difference
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	CG: Start	-.53
	CG: End	-.34
	CG: After six months	-.96
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.33
	CG: Start	-.86
	CG: End	-.67
	CG: After six months	-1.29
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.27
	TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	.06
	CG: Start	-.80
	CG: End	-.58
	CG: After six months	-1.23
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	-.24
	TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	.03
	CG: Start	-.77
	CG: End	-.55
	CG: After six months	-1.20
TG: After six months	TG: Had not seen any American TV series (beginning of experiment)	.40
	TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i> (end of experiment)	.64
	CG: Start	-.13
	CG: End	.09
	CG: After six months	-.56
CG: End	CG: Start	-.22
	CG: After six months	-.65
CG: After six months	CG: Start	.43
	CG: End	.65

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Figure 7.21 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' self-esteem during treatment processes**



### 7.2.5 Summary

The findings support part of the hypothesis 3.5 that viewing American TV series strengthen Chinese audiences' perceptions of American reality and weaken their perceptions of Chinese values. However, even with the decrease in the holding of Chinese values, the participants' attitudes to Chinese values still stays above the neutral level during both the treatment process and the following six months, which means that Chinese audiences still agree with Chinese values to a large extent. The findings reject another part of the hypothesis 3.5, namely that viewing American TV series strengthens Chinese audiences' perceptions of American values and weakens their perceptions of Chinese reality. The participants' attitudes to the overall American value did not undergo any statistically significant changes during the treatment process or during the following six months. But the participants' attitudes to certain values experienced significant change during the treatment process. For instance, the participants' attitudes to individualism became significantly more supportive after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* as compared with the start of the treatment. Although there are fluctuations in the control group's perceptions regarding reality and cultural values, no significant change was found in the tests. This means that there was no significant change in the control group's perceptions of reality and cultural values either during the experiment or the following six months. Therefore, the impact of viewing American television series on Chinese

audiences' values has been to adjust the audiences' perceptions of Chinese values and to accept certain American values.

### 7.3 Conclusion

The experiment showed that the American television series could have some influence on Chinese audiences and that different genres could have different effects. With online media, of course, audiences can choose content based on their favourite genres. This could potentially alter the cultivation effect that television content can have on them. The main idea of cultivation theory is that the more time viewers spend on television, the more likely they will believe that what is shown on television is real (Gerbner et al., 1980a). The findings of this study show that the participants reported higher perceptions of American reality after they had watched the drama and comedy series versus the fantasy series. This means that content that is closer to reality will encourage audiences to believe in that reality as shown.

Participants' attitude towards overall Chinese value became significantly less supported after each treatment (viewing of American TV series). More specifically, after seeing *The Big Bang Theory*, participants became less supportive of sexual conservatism, family orientation, and prudence; after seeing *Arrow*, participants became less supportive of sexual conservatism, relationship by status, and prudence; after seeing *House of Cards*, participants became less supportive of sexual conservatism, and prudence. Participants' attitude to non-competitiveness, respect for tradition, and thrift were not impacted by viewing American TV series during the treatment.

Concerning the perception of American values, there are no significant changes in attitudes to the overall American value during the treatment. Specifically, participants' attitudes towards individualism became more supportive after seeing *The Big Bang Theory* compared to the beginning of the experiment. There are no changes in audiences' attitudes towards the other American values found during the treatment. This may be because the adoption of new cultural values may take longer than the time spent on viewing three seasons of American TV series (Abramson & Inglehart, 2009; Inglehart & Abramson, 1994). According to Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976), media clarify values by presenting information that contains a conflict of values and then audiences adjust these values in their own value system. This was shown in the findings that audiences' support for Chinese values dropped after seeing American TV series. But in order to accept new American values, the adjustment would take more time than available in this experiment.

This experiment did show some tendencies for value adjustments during treatment. The mean score (see Table 7.43 and Figure 7.22) shows Chinese audiences' agreement with the overall Chinese value dropped after viewing *The Big Bang Theory*; meanwhile, their acceptance of the overall American value rose. Then their acceptance of the overall Chinese value and the overall American value both dropped slightly after watching *Arrow*. The Chinese audiences' acceptance of the overall American value continued to drop after watching *House of Cards*, while their acceptance of the overall Chinese value rose.

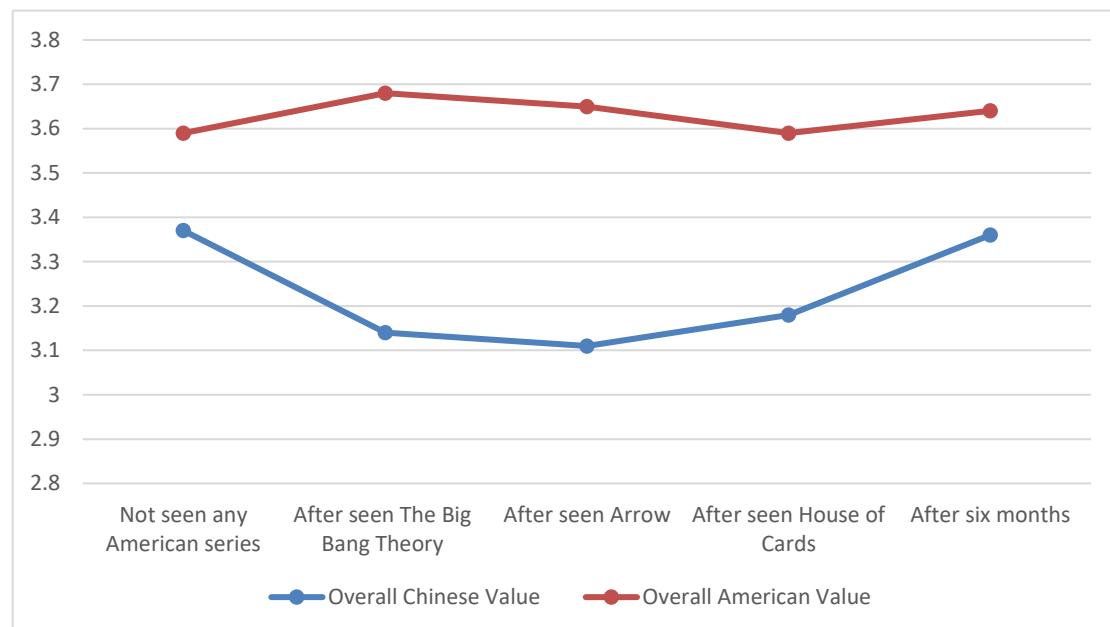
However, the findings did show the limits of the cultivation effects. The audience was adjusting their priorities regarding their cultural values during the treatment period, when they were engaging with American TV content. But, six months after the experiment, the Chinese audiences' acceptance of the overall Chinese value and the overall American value went back closer to where they were at the beginning of the experiment. This indicates that societal firewalls limit cultivation effects. The audiences' change of perceptions of cultural values may have been undone after the audience stopped engaging with American TV series and interacted only with Chinese social reality.

The adjustment in cultural values could also be seen in each treatment process by comparing each pair of specific values. Consider the treatment of viewing *The Big Bang Theory* for instance; the participants' supportive attitude towards American values such as sexual liberation, individualism, and leisure rose after watching this American TV series (dropped in the paired Chinese values of sexual conservatism, family orientation, thrift), but dropped regarding American values such as adventurousness and competition (dropped in the paired Chinese values of prudence, and rose in the paired Chinese value of non-competitiveness), and remained unchanged regarding the American values of modernity and equality (dropped in the paired Chinese values of respect for tradition and relationship by status). The Chinese audiences' expressed a higher level of support for one American value (such as sexual liberation) but the drop in their support of the paired Chinese value (such as sexual conservatism) shows that the Chinese audience were adjusting their perceptions of the Chinese value. However, a drop in support for both values (such as adventurousness and prudence), or an unchanged level of support for one American value (such as equality) but a drop in support for its paired Chinese value (such as relationship by status) shows that the Chinese audience were adjusting their perceptions of Chinese values without change their perceptions of the paired American value. These findings indicate that the Chinese audience adjusted their value priorities after actively engaging with American TV content.

**Table 7.43 Participants' perceptions of the overall Chinese value and overall American value**

	N	Overall Chinese Value Mean	Overall American value Mean
TG: Had not seen any American TV series	33	3.37	3.59
TG: After seeing <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	33	3.14	3.68
TG: After seeing <i>Arrow</i>	33	3.11	3.65
TG: After seeing <i>House of Cards</i>	33	3.18	3.59
TG: After six months	32	3.36	3.64

**Figure 7.22 Mean scores of Chinese audiences' perceptions of the overall values during treatment processes**



The findings also show there are no significant changes in participants' perceptions of Chinese reality during the treatment processes except regarding their satisfaction with Chinese society. The results show that participants became more satisfied with the Chinese social environment after seeing *Arrow* compared with the beginning of the experiment. This may largely be caused by the content, as the fierce gun fight and violence in *Arrow* make participants think that Chinese society is safer than American society. This was found in the in-depth interviews (see the following chapter). However, comparing the mean value of the treatment group at the beginning with the mean value at the end of the experiment shows a drop in satisfaction with Chinese culture while there was a rise in satisfaction with Chinese economy and society. This could further confirm the finding in the online survey that the impact of viewing American TV series on perception of Chinese reality may be limited to culture.



## **Chapter 8 Explaining changes in values: The audience's adjustment of value priorities during the treatment**

"The access to foreign entertainment is ubiquitous on university campuses through many channels. And when living on their own for the first time in a much freer environment compared to the years preceding their university entrance exams, students are especially anxious to access these resources to explore their own identities and worldviews. For years, China's leaders have feared that they're losing their grip on the ideological loyalty of the country's youth. According to official rhetoric, the forces wresting away young minds are cultural warfare waged through alluring foreign pop culture and the infiltration of Western values." (Fish, 2017)

-- Eric Fish, *The Foreign Policy*, 9 February, 2017

### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings from the in-depth interviews conducted with ten participants in the treatment group after the experiment. The interviews were used to answer research question 12, specifically: What is the change in participants' understanding of cultural values and identity during the treatment? This chapter focuses on this decision making process, in order to see how viewing American TV series impacts Chinese audiences' perception of American values and Chinese values.

This research was conducted through in-depth interviews that showed the acceptance, conflict, and combination of cultural values in a Chinese cultural context. The findings in this study may not define the cognition process beyond the experiment as the whole treatment only lasted for three months, but it shows the direction of change for the long term. This chapter presents the findings of the in-depth interviews and explores the four steps or modes of value change processes among Chinese audiences through analysis of these interviews. To keep participants' information confidential, this study uses modified names when presenting the findings.

### **8.2 The Chinese audiences of American TV series: young and culturally-savvy audiences**

In Chapter Two, after reviewing the literature on American TV series in China, it mentioned that

most scholars describe the audiences as a younger generation with a relatively high education level and affluent standard of living compared to the audiences of other TV series (Jiang, 2014b). This claim was supported by the findings in Chapter Six of this study. This is easy to understand because the viewers need to have a degree of technical ability to access American TV series online, and they need have basic cultural awareness to understand what happens in those television series. Also, as mentioned, learning is one of the main gratifications that Chinese audiences seek from viewing American TV series based on findings in the survey chapter, which further explains why the audiences are from a younger generation, as this age group is more open to increasing their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Before undergraduate studies (about 18 years old), Chinese audiences are motivated to learn English, but they do not have enough time to access television, as they need to focus on studying and preparing for the most competitive exam in China — The National Higher Education Entrance Exam. That is why most audiences in online communities state that they first watched American television series after they went to college (Wen, 2008). During their college years, either undergraduate or postgraduate studies (19-28 years old), they have the motivation to learn English and enough time to watch American TV series, as most competitive jobs or research opportunities need candidates who can show their potential in English (Pan, 2007). Even five or more years after they start to work (about age 33), they may still keep watching American TV series, but slight less than when they were in college, as they need spend more time working and with family (Li, 2015; Shu, 2016). That is why the majority of Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are a young generation (18-30 years old), as supported by the online survey.

Interestingly, according to Berry (1997)'s study, mentioned in Chapter Three, people develop their cultural values during their emerging adulthood, especially from their late teenage years through their twenties. This means the majority of Chinese audiences who watch American TV series are at the age when they are more likely to develop their value system and potentially internalize American values based on what they see on television.

However, this still does not fully explain why American TV series are not popular among the older generations. In recent years, the gap between younger and older generations concerning access to American TV series has been narrowed by the rapid development of Internet infrastructure, the popularity of using smart televisions and mobile devices, and the contributions of subtitle groups. But the literature did not clearly explain why older generations have not become a larger share of

the audience for American TV series.

To find answers to this question, 10 participants in the treatment group were interviewed. When asked, ‘do you think you will consider watching American TV series after this experiment’, all of the nine young audience members answered ‘yes’, and mentioned their growing knowledge and enjoyment of American TV series. Yixuan, one of the participants in her twenties, stated that ‘I surely will continue watching American TV series as the story has so many twists and turns; it is an excellent resource for me to understand American culture.’ (Yixuan, 2016). According to another participant, Yanyun, in her early thirties, ‘Yes, I will continue watching American TV series. They look more real than Chinese ones; I mean closer to reality.’ (Yanyun, 2016)

However, the two elderly participants reported that they will not continue watching American TV series after the experiment. This included one of the elderly participants, Weixia, who dropped out halfway through the experiment (her data was excluded from the experiment). They stated that the online viewing experience of the original soundtrack with Chinese subtitles hinders their engagement with the content. They also stated that they preferred viewing American TV series with Chinese dubbing. According to

Zezhen, an elementary school teacher in her fifties:

I am not going to continue watching American TV series. I cannot understand their language and it is tiring to read subtitles while watching television at the same time. I would rather watch a dubbed one than a subtitled one. This intense subtitle reading makes my brain running all the time and was exhausting. I prefer to watch with Chinese dubbing instead. (Zezhen, 2016)

Weixia, a cashier working for the local government in her late forties, stated:

I definitely will not be watching American TV series. I want to focus on the development of stories, the emotions of the actors. But at the same time, I have to read the subtitles. The subtitles run so fast that I cannot even keep with the pace. So I think I lost lots of conversations. However, I like South Korean series more, because they are dubbed in Chinese and I do not even need to think while watch them. (Weixia, 2016)

The major method of accessing American TV series by streaming with subtitles blocks older Chinese generations from accessing American TV series. The more time that this older audience spent on reading subtitles, the less time they had on processing other information such as the characters and stories. The lack of understanding and enjoyment of the content caused them to prefer their native language series (De Bruycker & d'Ydewalle, 2003), which means they are more likely to enjoy Chinese dubbed series. In this circumstance, American TV series in China may still maintain dominance among younger, cultural and technology-savvy viewers but not amongst older audience members. These findings show that individual firewalls, especially in terms of access and processing, undermine the impact of American TV series on Chinese audiences as a whole.

### **8.3 The cognition process of cultural values**

Although the Chinese audiences of American TV series are very open to American culture, the dynamic of cognition process between external values (American values) and internal values (Chinese values) is still a mystery. The data from in-depth interviews could help to answer the participants' changes in understanding of cultural values during the treatment. The findings shows four states: rethinking American values, perception of conflict between cultural values, adjusting the value priorities, and integrating American values with internal Chinese values.

#### **8.3.1 Rethinking American values**

In the experiment, it is claimed that there is a negotiation process between the external values that Chinese audience saw on American TV series and their own internal Chinese values. This is based on the mean value of the audiences' attitude toward the overall American value, which rose after viewing *The Big Bang Theory*, moving to be more supportive of American values, but then dropped after the audience saw *Arrow* and *House of Cards*. The Chinese audiences showed their openness toward American values through their favouring of the new cultural experience, and also their wariness of American values. They equated American values with televised American reality, but separated this perceived American reality from their own reality in order to understand these American values.

When asked the question 'which American values in those American TV series impressed you significantly', one of the participants, Zezhen, stated that viewing American TV series helped her to understand American values; however, she emphasized the different ways of thinking between

American and Chinese people:

I think these American TV series have great influence on me. Before I watched these series, sexual liberation and homosexuality were unacceptable to me. But American culture, lifestyles, social conditions are different, I started to understand them. American people like overspending their money, but it seems reasonable after I saw their life attitudes and habits. Between the family and individual, Americans believe that maximum individual benefits is good for the family. But our Chinese culture is the opposite. I understand it now, we just thinking in different angles. (Zezhen, 2016)

Other participants mentioned that after viewing American TV series, they resonated with some of the American values. The following are some of their statements.

I admire Americans' lifestyles, they are brave to seek adventurous and excitement, which impressed me a lot. Besides, people are equal and seems close to each other without too much barriers. (Zhigang, 2016)

I like that they (Americans) are brave to accept the reality, challenge themselves. If they want to achieve somethings, they will try their best to take the chance. Relate to individualism, it is our own life, so we need to hold and make best of our lives. (Yanyun, 2016)

American TV series helps me see America more clearly and understand American lifestyles more vividly. It changed some of my traditional ideas. The most influencing ideas relating to their lifestyles are respect for privacy and freedom. They worship unknown areas and love to live an adventurous life, which reflect in their creativity. This is my favourite part about America. (Dongfang, 2016)

Before Chinese audiences viewed any American TV series, they may have had no ideas about what America and American lifestyles looked like (Jackson, 2016). They just picked the information piece by piece from reading related information, which includes lots of misunderstandings and stereotypes (Jackson, 2016). Although presumably the American TV series also promote stereotypes and misrepresent the life of ordinary Americans. The American way of life is the first thing Chinese audiences are attracted to while viewing American series (Lin, 2014b). This leads to adjustments in

their perceptions of American reality and more understanding and acceptance of American lifestyles (Lin, 2014b). During this process, audiences access American values and understand them based on their perception of American reality and lifestyles (Ma, 2014b).

### **8.3.2 The conflict between cultural values**

If cultural values from one culture could cause an impact on audiences in other cultures, the start of this process are the presentations of the differences and conflicts between these cultural values through the media (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976). In Chapter Five, the analysis of the comments of Chinese audiences showed that there are differences in values between American TV series and Chinese TV series. The comments on Chinese TV series are more likely to show the audiences' supportive attitudes toward Chinese values, while comments on American TV series are more likely to favour American values. But the content analysis cannot assess Chinese audiences' reactions when they encounter some American values that conflict with Chinese values when they view American TV series.

Although the conflicts exist between cultural values, the survey findings show that American values could coexist with Chinese values according to specific criteria. In Chapter Six, the survey findings show that the amount of time spent watching American TV series could predict the audiences' supportive attitude toward family orientation, and individualism, which means long-term audiences tend to be more supportive of both these two values than short-term viewers. This means that viewing American TV series helps Chinese audiences to understand individualism without diminishing their value of family orientation.

However, the data shows a fluctuation of participants' attitudes toward family orientation and individualism during the experiment. Regarding family orientation, audiences' support dropped noticeably after they had seen *The Big Bang Theory*, then rose continuously after the audience had seen *Arrow* and *House of Cards*, but they were not as supportive as they at the beginning of the experiment. Meanwhile, audiences' support for individualism rose a lot after seeing *The Big Bang Theory*, then dropped after they had seen *Arrow*, but their level of support rose again after seeing *House of Cards* and was more supportive than at the beginning of the experiment.

But if these two values were combined in one case, what would the participants choose? When asked, 'what would you do if there are conflicts between family interests and individual interests', most interviewees resonate with Chinese tradition and stated that family should come first.

I would sacrifice my personal interests for family interests. Because for me, achieving family interests means achieving my own interests. (Zezhen, 2016)

If the family needs it, I think I will give up my own interests. Because if we do something that is harmful for family interests, we will be called 'disloyal to the family'. There is an old saying: filial piety should come first in all goodness and kindness. So I would consider to sacrifice my interest in exchange of family interest. (Zuwen, 2016)

The concept of family is very strong in China. Even in Western countries, family ties are important. So, I would sacrifice my interests for family interests. (Dongfang, 2016)

It depends; most of the time I will sacrifice my own interest for family (Panli, 2016)

As most interviewees agree that family should come first, the researcher created a situation for them to think about individualism based on the settings of *The Big Bang Theory*. In Chinese tradition, individuals move out from the family home after marriage, which symbolises the start of individual's independent life (Yi, 2010). When asked 'after marriage, would you rather live with your parents or live by yourself?' All the interviewees answered that they would like to live by themselves and look after their parents at the same time. They mentioned that a big family would bind their lives, or the generation gap with their parents, or different lifestyles and they need space, or they prefer to visit their parents frequently and live in different apartments. This means that family orientation and individualism could both be supported in different situations by the audience, and the values are compatible with each other.

Regarding other American values, the conflicts could transform into confrontations when the audiences had just started viewing the American TV series. The attitude towards prudence and adventurousness is one example of conflicting values. The survey findings show exposure time to American TV series did not predict the audiences' support of prudence, but it is a predictor of adventurousness. This means there are no differences in attitude related to prudence between heavy viewers and light viewers of American TV series. But heavy viewers tend to be more supportive of adventurousness than light viewers. The length of exposure could also predict the audience favouring adventurousness, not prudence. This means long-term viewers seem more supportive of

adventurousness than short-term viewers. The survey findings did prove that viewing American TV series could help Chinese audiences to understand American values such as adventurousness without changing in their perceptions of Chinese values like prudence.

However, the support for prudence among the participants saw a continuous drop during the experiment. But their supportive of adventurousness fluctuated during their viewing of the three American TV series. Their supportive for adventurousness dropped after seeing *The Big Bang Theory*, then rose after seeing *Arrow*, but dropped again after seeing *House of Cards* to a point that is lower than that at the beginning of the experiment. This shows a conflict between these two values in audiences' minds; they started to engage with this external value, adventurousness, as they had seen it on television.

In the in-depth interview, interviewees were asked: 'In your life, which kind of lifestyle seems more attractive to you, a prudent life or an adventurous life? Prudence life means trying your best to eliminate the potential risks that you would face while an adventurous life means to take the unknown future as a challenge and solve the problems on the way. Do you think Frank Underwood in *House of Cards* should be cautious in his already high position, or should he be adventurous to fight his path out of being president with the risk of going down?' Most interviewees' answers show awareness of cultural realities, as they stated support for prudence. However, the border between the two values started to blur as they mentioned they would favour adventurousness if they were in that position or had the abilities of the main character Frank Underwood in *House of Cards*.

According to Zezhen, 'I prefer a regular and fixed lifestyle. I need to live a casual and normal life. If you want to take someone down, it could be a success or failure. I do not like that kind of adventurous life, I like to be myself and live a life that I love' (Zezhen, 2016). Kufang also corroborates with the view: 'Considering my age, I prefer to live a prudent life. Because just choosing to do some adventurous based on my own interests would have some chance of putting my family at risk. I want to be responsible for my family and myself, so I prefer to do things that are safe. If I was in the situation of Frank, I would stay with my original position and try to do my best work. I would avoid taking risks because doing my current work best could also achieve my political ambitions' (Kufang, 2016).

Other participants also mentioned their supportive for prudence, but wished to live an adventurous life like Frank in *House of Cards*:



For my current situation, I tend to be live a stable life. Meanwhile, I am also yearning for that kind of adventurous life, so it is kind of a contradictory condition. Based on my understanding of politics, if you do not step on others, other people will step on you. But if I was him, I would rather stay at his original position and do my best job there. (Panli, 2016)

I surely like to live an adventurous life, but only under the condition that I have the ability to solve the problems that I encounter. Adventure would make our life more colourful, but it does not mean we should take risks purely for being adventurous. Prudence and adventurous life are just two kinds of attitudes. The first one needs to foresee the problems and solve them; the later one waits for the problems to appear to solve them. In this sense, I prefer to live a prudent life. If I was Frank, I would take the risk of running for president. Because we need to give our life some challenges. When we are in a good living condition and with certain accumulation of experiences, we should consider moving upward. So if I was a mature politician like him, I would push myself upward and take some risks. (Dongfang, 2016)

While answering questions interviewees would often remind themselves that Chinese social reality does not allow them to live an adventurous life as they do not want to risk their family interests and leave their comfort zone. Moreover, being prudent (in Chinese 沉稳 *chenwen* or 稳重 *wenzhong*) is a symbol of being a mature and responsible adult in Chinese society (Huang, 2003). On the contrary, adventurousness is a sign of not taking life seriously, fooling around, and lacking responsibility (An, 2013). However, when they see the potential achievements and exciting life that could be a result of being adventurous as shown in the American TV series, there are signs that they begin to yearn for an adventurous life if conditions allow it. For instance, the interviewees believe that if they had the ability to handle the problems like Frank Underwood in *House of Cards*, they would try to achieve the position of president, like him.

### **8.3.3 The adjustment of value priorities**

The conflict between American values and the Chinese audiences' internal values was shown clearly during their viewing of American TV series. But the process of internalizing these values could require longer exposure to American TV, which could help normalize them and lead to adjustments to value systems and integration of these values (Gerbner et al., 2002a). During the experiment in

this study, the participants only viewed three seasons of American TV series, so the chance of significant change in their values would be very small. However, their thinking about American values did indicate the dynamic and direction of this change at work.

Take one pair of the most conflicted values between Chinese values and American values - sexual conservatism versus sexual liberation, as an example. In Chapter Five, the analysis of the comments about American TV series and Chinese TV series shows a difference **in relation to** these two values. Among the comments about American TV series, 196 audience members identified sexual liberation and 0 member identified sexual conservatism. But among the comments on Chinese TV series, there are 41 audience members identified sexual conservatism and 3 audience members identified sexual liberation. In Chapter Six, the findings of the online survey show that exposure to American TV series did predict the audiences' perceptions of these two values, with heavy viewers tending to be less supportive of sexual conservatism than light viewers, and more supportive of sexual liberation than light viewers. The length of exposure also predicts the support of these two values, with long-term viewers tending to be less supportive of sexual conservatism than light viewers, and tending to be more supportive of sexual liberation than light viewers. The experiment in this study also confirmed this argument and, furthermore, addressed methodological concerns over whether supporters of sexual liberation in the two earlier studies may have been predisposed to these positions. During the treatment, the mean value of participant attitudes to sexual conservatism continuously went down after seeing *The Bing Bang Theory* and *Arrow*, but went up a little after seeing *House of Cards*. However, the mean value was notably below the original level during the treatment, which showed that the participants became less supportive of sexual conservatism during the treatment. Meanwhile, the mean value of the participant attitude to sexual liberation went up after seeing *The Bing Bang Theory*, then went down after seeing *Arrow*, but went up again after seeing *House of Cards*. However, the mean value never went back to the original level during the experiment or even six months after the experiment. The experiment confirms the assumption that there is an adjustment process during the treatment, with the result that participants became less supportive of sexual conservatism and more favourable of sexual liberation. But how could Chinese audiences resolve this conflict and accept sexual liberation? Interviewees were asked 'in *Arrow* the main character, Oliver, holds a casual attitude towards sex; in *House of Cards* Frank and his wife have an open relationship and are quite open toward sex, and the main actor in *The Big Bang Theory* Jim Parsons is gay in real life. What do you think of Americans liberated attitude toward sex?' Most participants still have divided concerns about sexual liberation as they associate the value with American reality, but their guard came down and they rationalized the value in their life. This

indicates that the audience started to adjust their values on this issue. According to Zezhen, 'I think in our country, we are quite conservative toward sex and I do not agree with sexual liberation. But I must say, I did not accept sexual liberation and homosexuality before I had seen any American TV series. But afterwards, I feel like American cultural and social conditions are more open than ours and I can understand it now' (Zezhen, 2016). Zhigang also confirmed this view, saying that 'for Chinese tradition, I still cannot accept sexual liberation. But after seeing American TV series and their open lifestyles, I can understand and quite agree with them. But for myself, I still do not feel comfortable doing that' (Zhigang, 2016). Yixuan shared the same view 'I could accept other people's openness on sex, but I cannot accept myself doing that' (Yixuan, 2016). Others started to agree with some aspects of sexual liberation.

I cannot totally accept sexual liberation; Chinese society still values its tradition. But I do accept to some extent and conservatism also to some extent. I am supportive of gay rights (Yanyun, 2016).

To some extent, I could accept sexual liberation. But in our Chinese living environment, it could be hard to accept if we have the same extent of openness on sex like Americans. For homosexuality, I accept them as everyone has right to their freedom. You cannot stop others just because you do not like it. If two people want to live together, then it is all good (Xinghua, 2016).

I could accept sexual liberation, although Chinese society is very traditional. But highly educated people with certain knowledge of Western culture should understand that sex is only the next stage of falling in love, it is a development of a relationship. For homosexuality, it is a human right and should be protected. If they do not publicly influence other people's lives, it could just be their privacy of sexualities. (Dongfang, 2016).

After frequent exposure to American TV series and encountering the conflict of values many times, Chinese audiences begin to associate this conflict with different cultural and social conditions, and accept the rationality of these American values. The interviewees often considered external values from the perspective of American culture and tried to absorb the validity of these values by adjusting their values system. 'Sex' may be a taboo to talk about or show in Chinese media, but after the Chinese TV audience had seen this subject frequently in American TV series, they started to

reconsider the rationality of sexual liberation. They labelled sexual liberation as a part of open or developed culture when compared with Chinese culture and understood it to be reasonable to have these values. Then, after they watched American TV series for a longer period of time, this kind of understanding or perception of American values transformed into internalization of values for the Chinese TV audiences.

### **8.3.4 The integration of American values**

As a result of the findings in Chapter Six and Chapter Seven, this study found the internalization of American values by the Chinese viewers of American TV series, but this does not mean that Chinese audiences simply adopted all the American values they perceived. During the process of internalization the audiences adjusted some of their Chinese values and integrated American values that they felt were valid in the Chinese reality.

In the survey findings, it shows that the exposure time did not predict the overall Chinese value, but did predict the overall American value. This means heavy viewers tend to be more supportive of American values, but there are no differences between them in relation to the overall Chinese value. But if we break down the overall value into individual values, we can see this finding more clearly. Among Chinese values, exposure time did have statistical significant effect in predicting the audiences' perception of sexual conservatism, with heavy viewers tending to be less supportive of sexual conservatism than light viewers. Exposure time did also predict sexual liberation, with heavy viewers tending to be more supportive of sexual liberation than light viewers. This means that sexual conservatism and sexual liberation are incompatible values. However, exposure time also predicted American values such as modernity, individual orientation, leisure, and adventurousness, which means that heavy viewers of American TV series tend to be more supportive of these American values than light viewers. But heavy viewers of American TV series have no difference in their support of the paired Chinese values such as respect for tradition, family orientation, thrift, and prudence than light viewers. Therefore, these American values could be compatible with Chinese values.

If we extend this to another measure as mentioned in Chapter Six, namely the length of exposure, more differences can be found in this internalization process. The length of exposure could predict the overall Chinese value, with long-term viewers tending to be less supportive of the overall Chinese value than short-term viewers. The length of exposure could also predict the overall American value, with long-term viewers more supportive of the overall American value than short-

term viewers. Looking at specific Chinese values, length of exposure to American TV series could predict sexual conservatism, relationship by status, non-competitiveness, and respect for tradition, with long-term viewers tending to be less supportive of these Chinese values than short-term viewers. There is also a special case in this prediction, as length of exposure could also predict family orientation, with long-term viewers tending to be more supportive of this value than short-term viewers, which means Chinese audiences still emphasise family values as the core of their culture. For American values, length of exposure could predict the Chinese audiences' perception of sexual liberation, competition, modernity, individualism, leisure, and adventurousness, which means long-term viewers tend to be more supportive of these American values than short-term viewers. Therefore, sexual conservatism versus sexual liberation, non-competitiveness versus competition, and respect for tradition versus modernity, are considered as incompatible values with long-term viewers tending to be more supportive of the American values and decreasing their support of Chinese values compared to short-term viewers. But family orientation versus individualism, thrift versus leisure, and prudence versus adventurousness could be compatible because they could support these American values without diminishing their support for Chinese values. But in the case of relationship by status versus equality, the values seem to be incompatible, because long-term viewers tend to be less supportive of relationship by status compared with short-term viewers, but there are no differences in attitude regarding equality, which means the audiences are trying to adjust relationship by status without being more positive of equality. This shows the integration of Chinese values and American values among audiences through viewing American TV series. But what is the pattern of this integration?

To explore the integration pattern of cultural values, we should determine whether the American reality that is depicted on American TV series could impact Chinese audiences' perceptions of their own reality. The identification of cultural values has a similar pattern to the identification of memory-based reality. The mindset about how to process information about one culture could influence people's cognition at a deeper level dealing with values. The mindset shows that the Chinese audiences integrated American values that they think are useful rather than accepting all of them.

During the in-depth interview, the interviewees could clearly distinguish between Chinese reality and American reality. They labelled American culture as a developed culture and tried to learn something positive from it. As Dongfang mentioned:

I am quite objective concerning this topic. Because Chinese history and economic development are different from America; so is culture. There are lots of things we need to learn from America, but we also have many things worthy for Americans to learn. We can improve ourselves by learn from each other (Dongfang, 2016).

Zezhen shares the same view:

I have never met any American in my life. I only get some information of their society and culture from American TV series. I think part of it is believable, but part of it I feel unsure. The affluence of American and their economy and culture are more developed than us. But Chinese society seems safer than America. It is just like Chinese food and Western food; you can never tell which one is better (Zhezhen, 2016).

Yixuan also emphasize the difference between the two cultures:

We should be objective. I did not grow up with the American lifestyle. If I was living in the US, I probably agree more with their lifestyle. But I live in China. This tradition has a large influence on me (Yixuan, 2016).

However, other participants mentioned the gap between China and America is not that wide and China also has its own advantages, which should be kept. According to Zhigang:

I do not think there is a big gap in the economy, culture, and social development between China and America. They are running on different tracks. China will get better in its social environment. I think our economy and culture could be as good as America (Zhigang, 2016).

Dongfang shared the same view about China:

I am very positive about the future of our country. China has an open heart for development and confidence in the development of its economy, society and culture (Dongfang, 2016).

The learning mindset and a strong sense of Chinese identity may thus determine that the impact of viewing American TV series by Chinese audiences is the integration of cultural values, and that this influence is limited to culture. According to Kufang:

I am optimistic of China's development. Tremendous changes have happened in our lives. Our lives became much better than before. Maybe we still need more time to reach the level of affluence as Americans, but our country has put in great efforts. I feel content of my current living condition and my life will get better in the future. I hope our country will improve its transparency in politics and I think it will be better (Kufang, 2016).

## **8.4 Conclusion**

The interviews show that Chinese audiences embrace American culture, and they also have an awareness of American culture, which makes them see the difference between each culture more clearly. In this circumstance, Chinese audiences seem to link their fondness for American culture with learning or expanding their views. With this mindset, Chinese audience are more likely to absorb the information that is good for them or apply information that they could use to improve themselves. This means that the impact on Chinese audiences' values could only be defined by selective integration, rather than Americanization or no effect (maintaining Chinese values). As mentioned in Chapter Three, psychologists Jensen et al. (2011) found four models of interaction between two cultures. The assimilation and separation model happens in a place where the local culture has been influenced by globalization. In the case of the assimilation model, the residents choose to embrace the global culture and reject local culture. But in the case of the separation model, the residents choose to keep allegiance to local culture and avoid contact with global culture. The marginalization model happens in the places where local culture has been altered by global culture and the distance between local culture and global culture is vast. The global culture seems unattainable and their local culture looks unrecognizable, so the residents feel both global culture and local culture have nothing to do with them and they are marginalized by both cultures.

These three models are not applicable in China based on the findings of this study. The Chinese economy has brought tremendous changes in peoples' lives, which shortened the gap between Chinese people's living conditions and what they have seen in American TV series. The achievable distance between Chinese reality and what audiences have seen on American TV series has triggered them to think about what is good and bad for them. In this case, the audience keeps an open mind

and is willing to accept new ideas, but they also feel a strong connection with Chinese culture.

As shown in the findings from this research, the impact of American culture on Chinese audiences fits the model of integration. The findings demonstrate that the individual firewalls, such as individual barriers to access and the ability to understand American TV series, mitigate the impact of American culture on Chinese audiences. The learning mindset determines that Chinese audiences may be critically supportive of American culture, but not supportive of everything (Buckley, 2015). These conditions have limited the impact of American TV series in China, and lead to the integration of cultural values rather than pure assimilation toward American values or polarization in Chinese TV viewers.



## **Chapter 9 Conclusion: The integration of American values within Chinese cultural context**

“To learn without thinking is blindness, to think without learning is idleness.”

*--Confucian analects*

### **9.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes and concludes the thesis based on its findings. It starts with a summary of the unique insights this study contributes to the knowledge of online media effects on cultural values and identity, especially in China. This chapter argues the relevance of cultivation theory, firewall model and the U&G approach to the essential part of this study within the online environment. Finally, the chapter identifies the limitations of the study and offers recommendations for further research.

### **9.2 Summary of the study**

Research on the pivotal role of cultural values for identity have been studied around the world (Arnett Jensen, 2003; Hall, 1992; Jameson, 2007; Ward & Searle, 1991). It has been argued that being lost in terms of one's cultural values may cause identity confusion and a sense of marginalization (Arnett, 2002). Smolicz (1981) points out that in a collective culture such as the Chinese culture, cultural identity differentiates its members from non-members by sharing core values. Psychologists have noted that exposure to globally accessed media, especially television and the Internet, could influence people's identity formation through interactions with virtual reality during their late adolescent years and their twenties (Arnett Jensen, 2003; Berry, 1997; Jensen, 2011).

The research for this thesis studied the impact of Chinese online audiences watching American television series, specifically regarding the audiences' cultural values and identity within the context of Chinese culture and society. Multiple studies related to Chinese audiences indicate that Chinese people who watch American TV series are mainly in their 20s – an age group that is open to

exploring their values and identity (Entgroup, 2014; Wen, 2008). Chinese scholars believe that television series reproduce social reality by reflecting on their meaning of a country's culture and have profound influence on both value formation and cultural trends (Hong, 2002; Zhong, 2010b). Scholars have also noted that television series play a critical role in terms of nurturing a virtual cultural public sphere, and has a solid ability to mold viewers' points of view, in either a positive or a negative way (Cai, 2017; Schneider, 2012). However, Western scholars have noted that Chinese viewers actively engage with television content rather than passively construing messages, by intelligently and customarily reading the overt and hidden meanings with the intention of reinterpreting the series in relation to their own individual experiences (Kong, 2014; Kramer, 2015; Lull, 2013; Schneider, 2012).

Accordingly, Chinese academics have conducted several studies concentrating on the impact that viewing American TV series can have on Chinese audiences (Gao, 2016; Huang, 2016; Lin, 2013; Wu, 2015). Meanwhile, little has been done in the area of assessing the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences' perceptions of realities, cultural values, and identity. Moreover, it should also be noted that little research exists regarding the mediate role that gratifications play within an online environment, despite exposure to media having an individual impact on identity formation as media usage allows individual interpretation of the content (Arnett Jensen, 2003). Furthermore, Chinese communication studies have not examined the model of value adjustment that occurs through media consumption. Also, no studies have been conducted on the reconcilability between American values and Chinese values within the Chinese cultural context. These gaps in the research remain despite studies that claim American TV series have impact on Chinese values (Wu, 2015; Zhang & Harwood, 2002; Zhao, 1989; Zhou, 2011b).

The main goal of this thesis was to begin to addressing these gaps in the literature while address a number of key questions: What is the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural values and identity? This thesis is a further contribution to studies of media effects in China with specific focus on cultural values and identity, which is believed to be core of the Chinese culture.

National strategies for dealing with the importation of media products have often been based on assumptions from cultivation studies and other research supporting media effects (Olson, 1999). The basic assumption of cultivation theory is that the audience is more likely to agree with American values after watching a large amount of American content. This study has assessed the relationship

between viewing American TV series and perceptions of reality, values, and identity, to determine if cultivation theory was relevant in the Chinese context. The study adopted a U&G approach to study the influence of gratifications on the effects of watching American TV series. Moreover, this study has also explored the value cognition process as the Chinese audience watched three American TV series, and how Chinese audiences adjust their value priorities.

In order to bring all these areas together, this study poses four main research questions that are restated below. After defining the variables and the measures, the four main research questions were further elaborated into 12 research questions that were investigated by examining the literature and determining the most useful methodology. Four of these research questions are addressed by using content analysis to explore the difference between Chinese and American TV series fan comments which reflect cultural values; Six of the research questions are examined through an online survey on the relationship between viewing American TV series and the audiences' perceptions of realities and cultural values, and the relationship between gratifications and perceptions of realities and cultural values; One of the research questions is answered by an experiment regarding the direct relationship between Chinese audiences' viewing of American TV series and their perceptions of realities and cultural values; Finally, one research question, which is answered through in-depth interviews, looks at changes in understanding of the cultural values and identity during the treatment from the experiment. The four aforementioned questions are:

- How do Chinese and American TV series reflect cultural realities and values?
- Do individual and societal firewalls limit the impact of American TV series?
- Does viewing American TV series affect the Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural realities and values?
- How do Chinese viewers seeking different gratifications from viewing American TV series differ in their perceptions of cultural values?

These research questions led to a triangulation of methodological approaches to achieve the main goals of the study. The multiple research methods focused on the same questions from different angles, offering additional insights versus just a singular method. Also, the data was obtained by diversified measures, such as unprovoked words (content analysis of online comments), provoked words (online surveys, interviews), unprovoked deeds (online observation), and provoked deeds (quasi-experiment), which complemented one another and added validity to the methodology.

This study introduced the central questions and summarized research gaps in Chapter One. This chapter also provided background information, such as the phenomenon of American TV series mania in China, the gratifications that the Chinese audiences seek from watching American TV series, the conflicts in values created by viewing American TV series, and the Chinese government's concern about American series. Chapter Two discussed the distribution models for American TV series during different time periods and further explained the online environment of viewing American TV series in China with strict censorship on traditional television and relatively less censorship of the Internet. Chapter Two also reviewed the research on the characteristics of Chinese audiences who watch American TV series. In addition, it compared the distribution of American TV series in China with distribution outside of China and stated the reason why the case in China is unique.

The literature review in Chapter Three outlined the four aspects of the literature that were essential to this study. It reviewed two main views related to American series in China, which are cultural imperialism and soft power. Cultural imperialism emphasizes the dominating power of one country's media that has a strong assimilative influence on another country's culture. The discussion of soft power highlights the attractive power of one culture to another culture, which emphasizes the free will of the audiences. In addition, this chapter reviewed one model, the firewall model, and two theories, cultivation and U&G, which formed the underlying theoretical framework of this study. Furthermore, Chapter Three reviewed the literature on the relationship between the media, cultural identity, and values. The existing research on these relationships provided strong literature support for this study. Moreover, Chapter Three reviewed the different cultural values between Chinese culture and American culture, and a reliable cultural index that was adopted for this study.

In Chapter Four, this study outlined the four research methods that were used, and justified the research goals for each research method. The chapter explained the reason why content analysis is the appropriate way to examine the difference between Chinese and American TV series in relation to the cultural values and their references that Chinese audiences perceived. It also discussed the reasons why an online survey was the most suitable method for analyzing the relationship between viewership, perceptions of realities and values, and gratifications. Moreover, it explains why the quasi-experiment was an appropriate method to study the change in audiences' value priorities from viewing American TV series. In addition, this chapter argued that an in-depth interview was the most suitable method to explore the cognition process regarding cultural value changes from the experiment. Above all, this chapter discussed why these mixed research methods, work well in

conjunction to answer the dissertation's central questions.

Chapter Five discussed the findings from the content analysis by reviewing the Chinese audiences' comments about American and Chinese TV series. The findings show that there are differences in the cultural values between Chinese and American TV series. The findings demonstrate that Chinese people who watch American TV series are more likely to identify American values. This means American and Chinese TV series are believed to contain different cultural values. These findings set the foundation for the whole thesis as media content, specifically television, is the resources that produces the effects in the Chinese television audiences.

Chapter Six explored the relationship between viewership and perceptions of values, and gratifications and perceptions of values. It found that societal and individual firewalls play an important role in shaping the characteristics of Chinese audiences who watch American TV series and hinder American TV series from reaching a larger audience group. It explained that viewership can predict the Chinese audience's perceptions of American values, which means the Chinese people who watch American TV series for a longer time tend to be more supportive of American values, and they tend to be more supportive of certain Chinese values, such as family orientation, but less supportive of other Chinese values, such as relationship by status. Moreover, when gratifications are added to the predictive variables, the results show that different gratifications have different predictive power in the Chinese audiences' perceptions of American reality. Chinese audiences who watch American TV series for learning and entertainment are more likely to believe that what they have seen on TV is real compared with people who watch for sociability and escape. As in perception of values, learning and entertainment have more predictive power in Chinese audiences' perception of American values compared with the sociability and escape gratifications. This shows that viewing American series have cultivated some American values among Chinese audiences and influenced the priorities of Chinese values. The findings in this chapter also demonstrate that gratifications have an influence on the effect that media produces on audiences. The desires for learning and entertainment could enhance the effect, while seeking sociability and escape could weaken the effect. Also, Chapter Four shows that viewing American TV series has an impact on Chinese audiences' satisfaction with Chinese culture rather than changing their satisfaction with the economy, society, and self-esteem, which means the audience's perception of their own culture is influenced by viewing American TV series.

Chapter Seven discussed the results of the experiment conducted on a treatment group and a control group composed of Chinese people who have never seen any American TV series prior to the experiment. The findings show that participant attitudes to the overall Chinese values became less supportive during each treatment process compared to their attitudes at the beginning of the experiment. However, participants' attitudes toward the overall American value did not change significantly. This means that viewing American TV series did cause an adjustment of value priorities among the Chinese audience; however, the treatment may not have lasted long enough to improve participants' understanding of American values. The findings show an adjustment of values during a process of value clarification. The findings show that the Chinese audience's satisfaction with Chinese culture dropped after the treatment; however, their satisfaction rose regarding satisfaction with the economy and society, which may confirm the findings from the online survey that viewing American TV series could impact Chinese audiences' perceptions of their own culture.

Chapter Eight digs deeper into the findings from the treatment by providing anecdotal evidence and further explanation. This is accomplished by conducting in-depth interviews and cross-referencing them with the findings from the online survey and the experiment. These support the results, namely the Chinese audiences' rethinking of American values, identifying conflicts between American and Chinese cultural values, adjusting of value priorities, and integrating some American values. While this experiment may only show the value cognition process during the treatment, it could also show the direction of change over a longer period. This chapter further identified the compatible and incompatible values between Chinese and American culture within the Chinese context.

In general, the framework of this thesis examined the differences between Chinese and American TV series in relation to cultural values and their references, the relationship between watching American TV series and the perceptions of realities and cultural values, the cognition of cultural values through viewing American series, and the compatible and incompatible values between Chinese culture and American culture in a Chinese context. These findings, as summarized above, indicate that viewing American TV series could impact Chinese audiences' perceptions of realities and cultural values; however, the gratifications sought could be an intervening variable in this process, as Chinese audiences integrate perceived American values with their own values during the viewing process.

It may be concluded that the impact of American TV series in China fit the category of soft power rather than cultural imperialism. This is based on the finding that the main gratifications Chinese

audiences sought from viewing American TV series are learning and entertainment. This shows that the popularity of American TV series came from the audience's attraction to TV series, rather than compulsory power. This study could be considered as an empirical study regarding the effect of TV series underlining soft power or cultural diplomacy. The findings show that the majority of Chinese audiences who watch American TV series perceive positive images of the United States and American people. Chinese audiences also acquire an integration of American cultural values through viewing American TV series. However, the findings also indicate that the impact of viewing American TV series is only limited to the Chinese audience's perception of culture, rather than economy and society, which confirms the limited influence of soft power.

Much of the research related to American TV series in China follows the perspectives of the Chinese government and only focuses on the negative influences of American TV and American culture on Chinese culture. This leads to a one-sided view, and neglects to assess that viewing American TV series involves a cognition process of understanding American reality and values. The lack of study regarding the media content weakens the arguments of previous media effect studies, as these studies are built on the premise that the values reflected in Chinese TV series and American TV series are different. Moreover, focusing too much on the erosion of Chinese traditional cultural values, rather than understanding American values through viewing American TV series, prevented researchers from providing a full picture of the impact of viewing American TV series on Chinese audiences' cultural identity and values.

Therefore, Chinese government officials could benefit in their understanding regarding their concerns by looking at them more subtly, especially in an online environment. They should note that the integration of American values has happened within the framework of the Chinese cultural context, not at the expense of losing Chinese cultural identity and values. Moreover, they should make efforts to make better cultural policies with an understanding of the gratifications of Chinese audiences, instead of relying on censorship and restraint.

Furthermore, Chinese societal firewalls and individual firewalls limit the cultural impact of American TV series in China. At the societal level, Chinese broadcasting censorship and legal restrictions prevent American TV series from being shown by the mainstream media, which excludes them from a large number of viewers and limited the American TV series' impact online. Language and culture barriers have hindered the Chinese audience's understanding of American TV series, despite the accessibility of American TV series due to improving Internet infrastructure. Also,

the way of viewing, which is streamed TV programs on the Internet with the original soundtrack and Chinese subtitles, prevents older Chinese generations from accessing American TV series, as the findings from the in-depth interview shows in this study. These firewalls have restricted the Chinese audiences of American TV series to a group that is relatively young, well-educated, and earning a higher income, as shown in the survey findings. The findings also show that the Chinese audiences of American TV series are an age group that is more open to exploring their values and identity, meaning that they are more likely to be influenced by American TV series. Due to societal and individual firewalls, the Chinese cultural values remain embedded within the strong Chinese culture, and this limits changes to those values.

This study concludes that cultivation theory still applies to online television consumption, and the gratifications sought by the audience are an important intervening variable in predicting the extent of the effect. The integration of certain American values was based on the Chinese cultural context, and therefore may have some positive implications for Chinese society instead of endangering the safety of Chinese culture as Chinese government has proposed. For instance, sexual liberation was found integrate with Chinese values through viewing American TV series, while support of sexual conservatism was decreased during the process of watching American TV series. Sexual conservatism has long being accused of ignoring human rights such as women's rights and the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people in China. The findings also show that viewing American TV series could weaken Chinese audiences' supportive for relationship by status, which may further strengthen the equality of the society as being over-focused on status could fuel the existing bureaucratic and privileged class. The value of modernity and leisure that the Chinese audience absorbed from viewing American TV series may also have a positive influence on the development of the Chinese market economy. It may be concluded that viewing American TV series did not influence Chinese audiences' cultural identity.

### **9.3 Limitations of this study**

Every study is built on a limited set of objectives and limits of time and space. This study is not an exception. Thus, it is important to note the following limitations of this study.

First, one of the major limitations identified in this study is its focus on the impact of media content on cultural values. The differences in values between cultures are only indicators of cultural interactions and influences. Therefore, the seven pairs of values defined in this study can only treat the differences as indicators, and may not cover all the changes in the Chinese audiences' cultural



values. Culture, after all, is a complex and moving target, and limiting its definitional breadth to seven values limits other definitions and approaches to the concept.

Second, another limitation of this study is the inability to use full random samples in the survey, thus weakening this study's generalizability. Because Chinese audiences access American TV series through the Internet, which includes legal and illegal streaming and downloading, it is almost impossible to determine the entire population and a sampling framework that a simple random approach would require. This led to the use of purposive, quota and convenience sampling methods. It is noted that many previous studies have adopted convenience sampling among university students. But this study avoided only sampling students to strengthen the representation of Chinese audiences by including different audience groups. The sample shows matching and representation with the features of Chinese audiences of American TV series based on related statistics. The IP addresses show that the sampling was widely distributed over 236 cities including all 34 Chinese provinces and municipalities. The sample size shows that this is one of the largest studies of Chinese audiences of American TV series in China. It is also important to note that this limitation was ameliorated by using multiple research methods, as the results of the four methods were integrated to enrich the findings of this study. However, not being able to use a simple random sampling method means that the findings of this study can only be applied to the specific group comprising the majority of participants in this study and may not be considered as a study that represents the whole population who watch American TV series.

Third, this study has limited grounds for claiming causality from survey findings, despite the statistical controls. Despite using variables such as gender, age, education, wealth, and visiting the US or not, and using viewership to predict the Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural values, there may be other potential variables that could contribute to the process of changing values. Moreover, the gratifications desired by the audiences were also included as variables in this study to expand the range of variables. Furthermore, the experiment was adopted to reinforce the findings of the relationship between viewership and Chinese audiences' perception of realities and cultural values.

Fourth, this study used a quasi-experimental design within a natural setting; therefore the researcher did not have total control over the extraneous variables. This may have influenced the full establishment of causation factors. The recruitment of participants, which lacked random sampling, could limit the generalization of the results to a larger population. In addition, most of the previous

studies related to the impact of American TV series in China were conducted using a survey and rarely used an experiment. Therefore, it is important to note that there is no scientific basis for choosing three months as a timeframe for the experiment.

#### **9.4 Recommendations for further studies**

This study focuses on the impact that viewing American TV series has on Chinese audiences' perceptions of cultural values; therefore, this study concentrated on the different values between Chinese and American culture. This study did not concentrate on each specific value. Other studies could further explore the value cognition process by looking at specific values as different patterns of value in the cognition process were found in this study. Future studies could also explore the extent of the impact by studying compatible and incompatible values between Chinese culture and American culture within the Chinese context.

It is recommended that a study be carried out to conduct the same experiment for a timeframe of more than a year. The experiment in this study includes a treatment lasting for three months and follow-up research that was conducted six months after the treatment. This study shows the adjustment of cultural values during the viewing of American TV series, but did not indicate significant changes in the Chinese audience's perceptions of American values, which shows that cognition of American values may need more time than the timeframe of this study. Therefore, future studies could consider using a longer timeframe for the experiment.

Also, this study shows the genre of television series can influence the Chinese audiences' perception of American reality and values. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies focus on the impact of a specific genre of television series, such as comedy, because comedy turns out to be an easier genre for audiences to understand the values that are reflected in it (Laham, 2009). Also, comedy is one of the most popular genres of American TV series in China (Jiang, 2014b).

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## Appendix

### Appendix A: Ranking of American TV series in China (2013-2014)

No.	American TV series	Viewership (million)
1	The Vampire Diaries (Season 4)	121
2	Arrow (Season 1)	111.68
3	The Big Bang Theory (Season 6)	92
4	The Walking Dead (Season 3)	58
5	Two Broke Girls (Season 2)	52.8
6	Gossip Girls (Season 6)	40
7	Elementary (Season 1)	36.4
8	Beauty and the Beast (Season 1)	30.6
9	Revenge (Season 2)	29.4
10	Revolution (Season 1)	27.7

**The Most Popular American TV series in China (2013)<sup>7</sup>**

No.	American TV series	No.	American TV series
1	House of Cards	6	The Vampire Diaries (Season 5)
2	The Walking Dead (Season 4)	7	The Big Bang Theory (Season 7)
3	Agents of Shield	8	House of Cards (Season 2)
4	The Originals	9	Breaking Bad
5	Two Broke Girls	10	Arrow

**The Most Popular American TV series in China (2014)<sup>8</sup>**

<sup>7</sup> The statistics accumulated from numbers of viewers in six major Chinese video websites (<http://tv.youku.com/us/ustv>, <http://tv.youku.com/us/ustv>, <http://tv.tudou.com/meiju/>, <http://www.iqiyi.com/dianshiju/oumei.html>, <http://v.qq.com/tv/yingmei/>, <http://tv.letv.com/us/>), details see [http://www.hjenglish.com/meiju/p605565\\_8/#slidetool](http://www.hjenglish.com/meiju/p605565_8/#slidetool), <http://tieba.baidu.com/p/2180496830>.

<sup>8</sup> The ranking are based on Baidu Index which accumulated by the biggest search engine Baidu.com, details see <http://www.hjenglish.com/meiju/paihangbang/>, <http://zhidao.baidu.com/question/1754741725520744228.html>



## Appendix B: Coding sheet for content analysis

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### ☐ **Coder:**

Meng	1
Ting	2

### ☐ **Comment Identity:**

No.1	1
No.2	2
No.3	3
.....	
No.1080	1080

### ☐ **Resources:**

Baidu Post Bar	1
Douban	2
Sohu	3
Weibo	4

### ☐ **Television Show:**

<i>Empresses in the Palace</i>	1
<i>Lurk</i>	2
<i>To Elderly with Love</i>	3
<i>The Big Bang Theory</i>	4
<i>House of Cards</i>	5
<i>Arrow</i>	6

### ☐ **Issue:**

Show	1
Character	2
Storyline	3
Real world	4
Other	5

☐ **Target of comment:**

America	1
Americans	2
China	3
Chinese	4
Other	5

☐ **Tone regarding target of comment:**

Positive	1
Neutral	2
Negative	3

☐ **Overall value (Topic sentence):**

Individual orientation	1
Family orientation	2
Leisure	3
Thrift	4
Modernity	5
Respect for tradition	6
Competition	7
Non-competitiveness	8
Adventurous	9
Prudence	10
Equality	11
Relationship by status	12
Sexual liberation	13
Sexual conservatism	14

☐ **Tone regarding overall value:**

Positive	1
Neutral	2
Negative	3

☐ **Value category 1: Individual orientation versus Family orientation**

Individual orientation	1
Neutral	2
Family orientation	3

☐ **Value category 2: Leisure versus Thrift**

Leisure	1
Neutral	2
Thrift	3

☐ **Value category 3: Modernity versus Respect for tradition**

Modernity	1
Neutral	2
Respect for tradition	3

☐ **Value category 4: Competition versus Non-competitiveness**

Competition	1
Neutral	2
Non-competitiveness	3

☐ **Value category 5: Adventurousness versus Prudence**

Adventurous	1
Neutral	2
Prudence	3

☐ **Value category 6: Equality versus Relationship by status**

Equality	1
Neutral	2
Relationship by status	3

☐ **Value category 7: Sexual liberation versus Sexual conservatism**

Sexual liberation	1
Neutral	2
Sexual conservatism	3

## **Appendix C: Codebook for content analysis**

### **Comments on Chinese and American Cultural Values**

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#### **A.1- Selecting which comments must be coded**

Comments that must be coded should include at least one attitude and one cultural value. Each comment is evaluated and coded based on its general meaning. Long comments, such as TV reviews, that consist of several sub-comments should be code in one coding sheet.

#### **A.2- Step 1: Comments on American TV series**

##### **Category 1: Websites**

The name of the websites the comments were collected from must be added to the database.

1. Baidu Post Bar
2. Douban
3. Sohu
4. Weibo

##### **Category 2: Shows**

The name of the Chinese and American TV series that the comments refers to should also be added to the database.

1. *Empresses in the Palace*
2. *Lurk*
3. *To Elderly with Love*
4. *The Big Bang Theory*
5. *House of Cards*
6. *Arrow*

#### **A.3- Step 2: Coding the comments**

##### **Category 3: Issue**

1. Show
2. Character
3. Storyline
4. Real world
5. Other

1. **Shows:** this category is for comments that focus on a TV series. For example, ‘*The Big Bang Theory* used many jokes from the TV show *Friends*’; ‘political struggle in *House of Cards* is intense and strategies from *The Art of War* seem to have been adopted in this TV series’; ‘*House of Cards* was also influenced by Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*’.

2. **Characters:** this category is for comments about characters, actors or actresses in the show. For example, ‘Sheldon is my favorite character in *The Big Bang Theory*’; ‘Kaley Cuoco in *The Big Bang Theory* got married in the last day of 2013, and she want enjoy her life before have a baby’.

3. **Storylines:** comments in this category focus on the plot and development of the story. For instance, ‘I thought the story of Peter in *House of Cards* was a ‘prodigal son’ story, but it changed so fast’.

4. **Real world:** this category is for comments about the real world as mentioned in a TV series. For example, ‘*House of Cards* shows Western democracy, but it’s not a utopian style democracy’.

5. **Other:** comments about other issues than the four categories listed above.

#### **A.4- Step 3: Coding tones toward America/China or American/Chinese people**

##### **Category 4: Target of comment**

1. America
2. American people
3. China
4. Chinese people
5. Other

##### **Category 5: Tone regarding category 4**

1. Positive
2. Neutral
3. Negative

Comments on America and American people:

1. **America:** the comment refers to America as a nation or a country.
2. **American people:** the topic of the comment is on American characters, stars, and people in

general.

Attitudes towards America and American people:

1. **Positive:** the comments contain positive expressions about America and American people.

**Example:** ‘I admire Sheldon’s life. Americans are living a free life without burdens. Chinese people’s lives are restrained by their families’. (**American people-Positive**)

‘I think the character Penny in this show was to bring up the contrast. She is a cliché character setting: blond, low level of education, and one-track minded person. However, she has wise in life, the quality that make Americans proud: the loyalty and commitment to friendship.’ (**American people-Positive**)

2. **Neutral:** comments that do not show any attitude.

**Example:** ‘I remember in college, our teacher said American television have a very serious problem, racism. Such as in sitcom, white people are always the main actors and actress, however, other people are in insignificant roles. In Big Bang Theory, Raj plays as a main supporting actor, it is really uncommon.’ (**American people-Neutral**)

3. **Negative:** comments that contain negative expressions about America and American people.

**Examples:** ‘Americans always depicted China as a villain, which is unfair, bad and full of prejudice. They think they are the world police.’ (**American people-Negative**)

Comments on China and Chinese people:

1. **China:** the comment refers to China as a nation or a country.

2. **Chinese:** the topic of the comment is on Chinese characters, stars, and people in general.

Attitudes towards China and Chinese people:

1. **Positive:** comments that contain positive expressions about China and Chinese.

**Example:** ‘Chinese people shouldn’t be vulnerable and sensitive. China should accept different opinions and face reality. Blacken China in American TV series is not a big problem. Our country has lots of potentials.’ (**China-Positive**)

2. **Neutral:** comments that do not show any attitude.

**Example:** ‘Compared with what we saw in *House of Cards*, collectivism is supreme in China; individual interests should surrender to collective interests.’ (**China-Neutral**)

3. **Negative:** comments that contain negative expressions about China and Chinese people.

**Example:** ‘Why stopped brought in *The Big Bang Theory*. It could be considered as popular science series. Chinese series are dumb and I cannot bear it anymore. China is surprisingly backward and lagging behind in technology’. (**China-Negative**)

‘I hate our people who are arrogant and think they are most awesome people in the world. Modesty is a virtue.’ (**Chinese people-Negative**)

## **A.5- Step 4: Coding overall values and tones**

### **Category 6: Overall values discussed in the comment**

American values (e.g. 1. Individual orientation, 3. Leisure, 5. Modernity, 7. Competition, 9. Adventurous, 11. Equality, 13. Sexual liberation)

Chinese values (e.g. 2. Family orientation, 4. Thrift, 6. Respect for tradition, 8. Non-competitiveness, 10. Prudence, 12. Relationship by status, 14. Sexual conservatism)

### **Category 7: Tone of the overall value**

1. Positive
2. Neutral
3. Negative

Overall values are the dominant values the observer discusses in the topic sentence of a comment.

They could be:

**American value:** these are comments that are dominated by American values. The commentators use more words to depict their understanding about American values or they use American values to interpret their understanding in the topic sentence. They show their preference for American culture and values.

**Example:** The comments have a topic sentence such as ‘America have different system, the people are deeply influenced by their ideologies, Americans emphasize individualism and protect personal interests and assets, which impressed me a lot’. (**Individualism-Positive**)

**Chinese values:** these are comments that are dominated by Chinese values. The commentators use more words or paragraphs to depict their understanding about Chinese values or they use Chinese values to interpret their understanding in the topic sentence. They show their preference for Chinese values.

**Example:** The comments have a topic sentence such as ‘I think saving money is important, as what you saw in American series that they spend generously on their cars, but do not have money when emergency that needs money happens.’ (**Thrift-Positive**)

Tones of the overall values:

1. **Positive:** comments that use positive expressions to state the overall value.
2. **Neutral:** comments that use objective tones, neither positive nor negative tones, to talk about the overall value.
3. **Negative:** comments that use negative expressions to state the overall value.

## A.6- Step 5: Coding values

**V1 Family orientation:** these are comments that advocate family values. Personal achievement and success should be secondary to family interests.

**Individual orientation:** there are comments that talk about how to achieve a personal goal by making every effort and put the individual’s achievement ahead of family interests.

### • 1 Family orientation

‘Americans do value families. There are many family-themed American TV series. *Modern Family*, *Growing Pains*, *Family Tie*, and *Brothers and Sisters* are examples of this. These television shows reflect the value that family always comes first. They focus on the relationship between parents and their teenage children, or adults and their parents. The storyline is rooted in social reality. Audiences can learn a lot about how to solve family problems from watching these TV shows.’

### • 2 Neutral

‘Kaley Cuoco, the main actress in *The Big Bang Theory* got married on the last day of 2013. In the latest interview, she said she wants to have a baby and she was born to be a mother and her husband loves baby too. The reason of they got married so fast is that they want to enjoy their life together first and a baby is definitely on the way.’



(Note: If comments stated both family orientation and individual orientation without showing any preference, they should be coded as neutral)

- **3 Individual orientation:**

‘Sheldon said he couldn’t understand why people want to find another person to spend their lives with. Maybe he is too ego and funny to need a life partner. He said he wish others will enjoy the happiness they obtain for their partner as much as he got from himself.’

‘In house of cards, Claire wants to take back her 200,000 dollars of equipment. But in order to achieve this, she sacrificed her husband’s interests.’

**V2 Thrift:** these are comments about spending money reasonably and with caution.

**Leisure:** these are comments emphasise luxury merchandises and lifestyles with admiration.

- **1 Thrift**

‘The clothes of actresses wear in *The Big Bang theory* are very simple. Penny’s dresses could barely fulfill the requirements in different occasions and Bernadette’s dresses are always in same style. But the thrifty style cannot influence their prettiness.’

- **2 Neutral**

‘The clothes of characters in this show is fixed. Howard always put in Vans, tight jeans, belt and high collar. Let’s talk about this.’

(Note: If a comment discussed both thrift and leisure without showing any preference, the comment should be put in the neutral category)

- **3 Leisure:**

‘I accidently found out that Raj wears Gucci shoes, and he is a rich man. But why did he not buy Gucci outfits to match his shoes? It’s hard to understand this.’

‘What I care about is the main character’s Lamborghini.’

**V3 Respect for tradition:** these are comments about following the rules of Chinese tradition or experiences in history.

**Modernity:** these comments emphasise new things, creation, and innovation.

- **1 Respect for Tradition**

‘The *Empresses in the Palace* stands out from so many costume drama in its usage of traditional poetry and Kunqu Opera. The traditional singing, dancing, martial arts, music instruments in this series appears much noble and graceful than others.’

- **2 Neutral**

‘In marriage tradition, love is the foundation of sex. They could have lot of fun when they young. But they have to keep a solid relationship after married.’

(Note: If a comment states both respect for tradition and modernity without showing any preference, the comment should be put in the neutral category.)

- **3 Modernity**

‘The most memorable line in *House of Cards* is ‘to improve is to change, to perfect is to change often’, I cannot agree more.’

**V4 Non-competitiveness:** these comments emphasise inner peace and keeping harmonious relationships with others, such as friendship being more important than competition.

**Competition:** these comments emphasise achieving goals through competition and realizing personal goals through competition.

- **1 Non-competitiveness**

‘All competitive persons in *Empresses in the Palace* are tragic characters, and even Zhenhuan is no exception. Even though she won at last and became the Empresses, however, she lost her husband, friends and being lonely in this world, what a tragedy. She should have kept peace with others.’

- **2 Neutral**

‘I love this episode every much. Raj’s puzzles are interesting with depth. When Penny was upset for no one won the game. Sheldon said: I won. Amy and Howard forgot they are in a game. They were indulged in to the music. At last, Raj told them in this happy game, everyone is the winner.’

(Note: If comments state both non-competitiveness and competitiveness or a win-win situation without showing any preference, it should be coded as neutral.)

- **3 Competition:**

‘In *House of Cards*, all I see is competition. No matter what a high position you are in, you will be put down if you are weak.’

**V5 Prudence:** these comments advocate stability and harmony in doing things.

**Adventurous:** these comments emphasise changes and taking risks.

- **1 Prudence**

‘She (Zhenhuan) does not care about the fame and wealth from the start, she just wants to live a safe and peaceful life.’

- **2 Neutral**

‘I watched *House of Cards* two times. People who really know how to play politics are cunning, shrewd. They will achieve their aim by any means. But they also know about humanity. They use their power to lure preys to walk into their interlinked traps. They are patient, ambitious and self-control predators.’

(Note: If comments both state both prudence and adventurous without showing any preference, it should be coded as neutral.)

- **3 Adventurousness:**

‘The main characters in *Arrow* are all born in rich families. However, they not only reject their wealth but also try to overturn their families and assets. The reason for them to do that is they just want to have adventurous lives. They are bored with their own lives.’

**V6 Relationship by status:** these comments emphasise following the order of social status in a relationship, such as men dominate women, and the old people dominate the young people.

**Equality:** these comments emphasise all men are created equal and people are equal no matter in higher status or lower status.

- **1 Relationship by status**

‘The low social status of Ms. An and her family determined her low position in the Palace.’

‘Television series is the reflection of a society. In relate to status, the boss will always be the boss, no matter how unwilling you are to follow their orders, but you have to.’

- **2 Neutral**

‘Just like what we saw in *Empresses in the Palace*, if you do not have prestige family background and high social status, you can only work hard to win the chances to success.’

(Note: If a comment state both relationship by status and equality without showing any preference, it should be coded as neutral)

- **3 Equality**

‘The relationship between Claire and Frank is equal. Claire doesn’t want to be normal. Only Frank knows her ambition. They have the same goal in their life.’

‘What I love in *The Big Bang Theory* is the equal relationship between people.’

**V7 Conservative in Sex:** these are comments about sex as something that must be done behind closed doors within the bounds of marriage.

**Sexual liberation:** these are comments emphasise sex is a basic human right and love is more important than marriage.

- **1 Conservative in sex**

‘Love is the foundation of sex. They could have lot of fun when they are young. But they have to keep a solid relationship after married.’

- **2 Neutral**

‘Leonard is a simple guy. Penny had slept with lots of guys. If she doesn’t cherish her relationship with Leonard, I think she will die alone.’

(Note: If a comment state both sexual conservatism and sexual liberation without showing any preference, it should be put in the neutral category.)

- **3 Sexual liberation**

‘Zoe took her own body as her weapon. It is only thing she can defend herself from the power of Frank. Zoe is not Frank’s love, she is his puppet.’

‘The *Arrow* made me realize that women treat sex so casually in the US and I admire that.’

## **Appendix D: Questionnaire (for online survey use)**

### **The Impact of American Television Series on Chinese Audiences**

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#### **Dear Respondents,**

This online survey is investigating the Chinese audience's exposure to American television series and its perceived impact. On the following pages, you will be asked to complete three sections of questions related to: (1) viewership & gratifications, (2) cultural values (3) cultural identity, (4) demographic information. The questionnaire will take approximately four to five minutes to complete. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may discontinue your participation at any time. You may also choose not to answer any question you do not wish to for any reason. This study does not pose any risk from participation beyond what would normally be encountered in everyday life. While there are no direct benefits to you for participating, the study will aid our understanding of American television viewing in China and its impact. The information that you provide in this study will be anonymous and no identifying information is being requested from you. All study records will be kept in a secure location, accessible only by the research team. The records will be kept as long as they are useful, but for at least five years, and then promptly destroyed. If you have any questions regarding this survey please contact Meng Xu ([mxu14@uclive.ac.nz](mailto:mxu14@uclive.ac.nz), Phone:+64 0223150017) in the Department of media and communication at University of Canterbury. Proceeding to answer the questions in this survey indicates you consent to participate in this study.

Thank you for your participation and understanding.

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**Section 1:** The questions in this first section are concerned with the American TV series. While answering the questions, please keep in mind that these are NOT about Chinese domestic television. Please respond to the following questions by choosing the number that you think best corresponds to your opinions or ideas.

---

1. Do you watch American TV series?

1. Yes

2. No (if not, go to section 2)

2. On an average weekday, how many hours do you usually watch American TV series, including

morning, afternoon and evening?

1. rarely
2. less than 1 hour
3. one hour or more, but less than 3 hours
4. three hours or more, but less than 5 hours
5. five hours or more

3. On typical weekends (Saturdays and Sundays) or holidays, how many hours do you usually watch American TV series, including morning, afternoon and evening?

1. rarely
2. less than 1 hour
3. one hour or more, but less than 3 hours
4. three hours or more, but less than 5 hours
5. five hours or more

4. How long have you been watching American TV series?

1. 0-3 months
2. 3-6 months
3. 6-12 months
4. 1-2 years
5. 2-3 years
6. 3-4 years
7. 4-5 years
8. more than 5 years

5. How accurate do you think American TV series reflect U.S. society and culture?

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Not at all

Very much

accurate

accurate

6. For what reasons do you think you watch American TV series?

strongly agree    agree    neutral    disagree    strongly disagree

They entertain me, Relax me	5	4	3	2	1
They pass the time, particularly when I'm bored	5	4	3	2	1
They are recommended by others	5	4	3	2	1
So I can share things I watch from the TV series with my friends	5	4	3	2	1
They offer a good way to learn English	5	4	3	2	1
They help me pick up many things about American culture	5	4	3	2	1
They can help me enter another world	5	4	3	2	1
They primarily help me fulfill the purpose of escape	5	4	3	2	1

---

**Section 2:** How much do you agree with the following statements? Please circle the number that you think best corresponds to your opinion.

---

1. How much do you agree with the following statements? Please circle the number that you think best corresponds to your opinion. (SA: strongly agree; A: agree; N: neutral; D: disagree; SD: strongly disagree)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
Premarital sex is bad	5	4	3	2	1

Important to obey the elderly and supervisors	5	4	3	2	1
--	---	---	---	---	---

Marriage between gay people are OK	5	4	3	2	1
---------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Competitions make life better	5	4	3	2	1
-------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

The modern lifestyle is good	5	4	3	2	1
------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

2. Now I will briefly describe some people. Using this card, would you please indicate for each description whether that person is very much like you, like you, somewhat like you, not like you, or not at all like you? (*Code one answer for each description*):

	Very much like me	Like me	Some- what like me	Not like me	Not at all like me
V 1. It is important to this person to think up new ideas and be creative; to do things one's own way.	5	4	3	2	1
V 2. Living in secure surroundings is important to this person; to avoid anything that might be dangerous.	5	4	3	2	1
V 3. It is important to this person to have a good time; to "spoil" oneself.	5	4	3	2	1
V 4. It is important to this person to do something for the good of family.	5	4	3	2	1
V 5. It is important for this people to point out someone's mistakes no matter they are in leadership or in higher social position; to care for equal rights.	5	4	3	2	1
V 6. Adventure and taking risks are important to this person; to have an exciting life.	5	4	3	2	1
V 7. Competition is unimportant to this person; try to avoid compete with others as much as possible.	5	4	3	2	1
V 8. Tradition is important to this person; to follow the customs handed down by one's family.	5	4	3	2	1
V9. Saving money is important for this person; to avoid buy expensive thing if it is unnecessary, even desires it a lot.	5	4	3	2	1

---

**Section 3:** How much do you agree with the following statements about China? Please circle the number that you think best corresponds to your opinion.

---

1. I am satisfied with the economic environment of China.



Not at all

Very much

1    2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

1    2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

1    2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

**Section 4:** Please answer the last few demographic items. As fully explained on the cover page of the questionnaire, your anonymity is fully guaranteed in this research. Thank you.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
poor middle rich

## Appendix E: Questionnaire (for experiment use)

### The Impact of American Television Series on Chinese Audiences

**Section 1** Please respond to the following questions by choosing the number that you think best corresponds to your opinions or ideas.

1. How accurate do you think American TV series reflect U.S. society and culture?

1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_ 5\_\_\_ 6\_\_\_ 7\_\_\_ 8\_\_\_ 9\_\_\_ 10

Not at all

Very much

accurate

accurate

2. How much do you agree with the following statements? Please circle the number that you think best corresponds to your opinion. (SA: strongly agree; A: agree; N: neutral; D: disagree; SD: strongly disagree)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
Premarital sex is bad	5	4	3	2	1
Important to obey the elderly and supervisors	5	4	3	2	1
Marriage between gay people are OK	5	4	3	2	1
Competitions make life better	5	4	3	2	1
The modern lifestyle is good	5	4	3	2	1

8. Now I will briefly describe some people. Using this card, would you please indicate for each description whether that person is very much like you, like you, somewhat like you, not like you, or not at all like you? (*Code one answer for each description*):

Very    Like    Some-    Not    Not at

	much like me	me	what like me	like me	all like me
V 1. It is important to this person to think up new ideas and be creative; to do things one's own way.	5	4	3	2	1
V 2. Living in secure surroundings is important to this person; to avoid anything that might be dangerous.	5	4	3	2	1
V 3. It is important to this person to have a good time; to "spoil" oneself.	5	4	3	2	1
V 4. It is important to this person to do something for the good of family.	5	4	3	2	1
V 5. It is important for this people to point out someone's mistakes no matter they are in leadership or in higher social position; to care for equal rights.	5	4	3	2	1
V 6. Adventure and taking risks are important to this person; to have an exciting life.	5	4	3	2	1
V 7. Competition is unimportant to this person; try to avoid compete with others as much as possible.	5	4	3	2	1
V 8. Tradition is important to this person; to follow the customs handed down by one's family.	5	4	3	2	1
V9. Saving money is important for this person; to avoid buy expensive thing if it is unnecessary, even desires it a lot.	5	4	3	2	1

---

**Section 2:** How much do you agree with the following statements about China? Please circle the number that you think best corresponds to your opinion.

---

1. I am satisfied with the economic environment of China.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Not at all

Very much

2. I am satisfied with the social/political environment of China.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Not at all

Very much

3. I am satisfied with the cultural environment of China.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Not at all

Very much

4. I am proud of being a Chinese.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Not at all

Very much

## Appendix F: Chinese version of questionnaire (for online survey use)

### 关于美国电视剧受众研究的调查问卷（网络调查用）

---

本问卷主要调查收看美剧的中国观众。你的回答将被用于研究美剧对于中国观众产生的影响。在接下来的问卷中，你将被问到关于以下几方面的问题：（1）美剧收视及需求满足，（2）文化价值观，（3）文化认同，以及（4）人口统计学信息。回答问卷将大约花费您 4-5 分钟时间完成。参与是完全尊重您意愿和自愿的。您可以在任何时间停止参与，你也可以出于任何原因，拒绝回答你不想回答的问题。本研究将不会对参与者产生任何风险，但是也不会给您带来直接的收益，只会对研究美剧对中国观众产生的影响产生帮助。您所提供的所有信息将在研究中保持匿名，并且不会向您要求提供可识别的个人信息。所有研究记录将被保存在安全的设施中，只有研究团队才可以使用。所有信息记录将被保存至今后五年，然后被消除。如果对本问卷有任何的疑问，请联系坎特伯雷大学媒体与传播系的徐盟（邮箱：mxu14@uclive.ac.nz, 电话：+64 0223150017）。参与填写本问卷将被看做同意参与本课题研究。非常感谢您的参与！

---

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**第 1 部分:** 这些问题是关于美国电视剧的调查，当您回答的时候，请记住不是关于国产剧的调查。请选择合适的答案来回答下面问题。

---

1. 请问您是否观看美剧？

- 1. 是
- 2. 否 (请转到第二部分)

2. 在周一至周五，您会花多长时间收看美剧，包括早上、下午和晚上？

- 1. 很少
- 2. 不到 1 小时
- 3. 1 小时或以上, 但是少于 3 小时
- 4. 3 小时或以上, 但是少于 5 小时
- 5. 5 小时或以上

2. 在周末（周六、周日）以及假期，您会花多长时间收看美剧，包括早上、下午和晚上？

- 1. 很少

- 2. 不到 1 小时
- 3. 1 小时或以上, 但是少于 3 小时
- 4. 3 小时或以上, 但是少于 5 小时
- 5. 5 小时或以上

3. 您从开始看美剧到现在有多久了?

- 1. 0-3 个月
- 2. 3-6 个月
- 3. 6-12 个月
- 4. 1-2 年
- 5. 2-3 年
- 6. 3-4 年
- 7. 4-5 年
- 8. 5 年以上

4. 在多大程度上您认为美剧能够反映真实的美国社会和文化?

1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_ 5\_\_\_ 6\_\_\_ 7\_\_\_ 8\_\_\_ 9\_\_\_ 10

一点都不准确

非常准确

5. 您收看美剧的原因有哪些?

强烈同意   同意   中立   不同意   强烈不同意

让我很开心,

放松自我                      5        4        3        2        1

打发时间,

特别无聊的时候            5        4        3        2        1

别人推荐我看的            5        4        3        2        1

这样我就能够和朋友

分享剧中看到的东西        5        4        3        2        1

看美剧是学习英语的好途径    5        4        3        2        1

能够让我轻松了解美国文化 5 4 3 2 1

让我进入另外一种生活 5 4 3 2 1

逃离现实生活 5 4 3 2 1

---

**第2部分:** 在下列论述中, 您在多大程度上同意这些观点? 请选择最符合您想法的选项。

---

1. 您在在多大程度上同意这些观点? 请选出最符合您观点的选项。(SA: 非常同意; A: 同意; N: 中立; D: 不同意; SD: 非常不同意)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
婚前性行为是一件很 不好的事情	5	4	3	2	1
服从长辈和领导很重要	5	4	3	2	1
同性婚姻是合理的	5	4	3	2	1
竞争让生活变得更好	5	4	3	2	1
保持现代化生活方式很重要	5	4	3	2	1

2. 下面我将描述一些人。根据旁边的量表, 判断这些人和你的观点是非常符合、符合、有一些符合、不符合、根本不符合。(请给每个描述都做出选择):

	非常 符合	符 合	有一些 符合	不符 合	根本 不符 合
V 1. 对于我而言, 能够有新点子和创造力非常重要, 处理事情的时候也要有自己的方式才好。	5	4	3	2	1
V 2. 拥有一个安全的生活环境很重要, 要尽量避免一切不安定的因素。	5	4	3	2	1
V 3. 休闲娱乐很重要, 要不时“放纵”一下自己。	5	4	3	2	1

V 4. 多为家庭考虑，做些对家庭好的事情很重要	5	4	3	2	1
V 5. 要指出别人的错误，即使是长辈或者领导，每个人都要平等对待。	5	4	3	2	1
V 6. 敢于探索和冒险很重要，这样能够过一个激动人心的生活。	5	4	3	2	1
V 7. 竞争对于一个人来说并不重要，要避免和别人的争夺胜负。	5	4	3	2	1
V 8. 传统对于我来说很重要，要保持家庭祖辈传承下来的习俗。	5	4	3	2	1
V 9. 节约对于我来说很重要，尽管很喜欢一件东西，如果不是必需品，尽量不买	5	4	3	2	1

---

**第 3 部分:** 在这些关于中国的陈述中，您在多大程度上赞成？请选择最符合您观点的选项。

---

1. 我对中国的经济发展环境满意

1\_\_\_2\_\_\_3\_\_\_4\_\_\_5\_\_\_6\_\_\_7\_\_\_8\_\_\_9\_\_\_10

非常不同意

非常同意

2. 我对中国的社会环境满意

1\_\_\_2\_\_\_3\_\_\_4\_\_\_5\_\_\_6\_\_\_7\_\_\_8\_\_\_9\_\_\_10

非常不同意

非常同意

3. 我对中国的文化环境满意

1\_\_\_2\_\_\_3\_\_\_4\_\_\_5\_\_\_6\_\_\_7\_\_\_8\_\_\_9\_\_\_10

非常不同意

非常同意

4. 我为自己是一个中国人感到自豪

1\_\_\_2\_\_\_3\_\_\_4\_\_\_5\_\_\_6\_\_\_7\_\_\_8\_\_\_9\_\_\_10

非常不同意

非常同意

---

**第 4 部分:** 请回答下面一些统计学信息。谢谢。

---

1. 你的性别？ 1.男    2.女

2. 你的年龄?

1. 小于 18 岁 2. 18-25 岁 3. 26-30 岁 4. 31-40 岁 5. 41-50 岁 6. 51-60 岁 7. 大于 60 岁

3. 你的受教育程度?

1. 小学 2. 初中 3. 高中 4. 大学本专科 5. 硕士或博士

4. 你去过美国么? 1. 去过; 2. 没有

5. 你对自己现在生活富裕水平的评价?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
低				中					高



## Appendix G: Chinese version of questionnaire (for experiment use)

### 关于美国电视剧受众研究的调查问卷（试验用）

**第1部分:** 在下列论述中，您在多大程度上同意这些观点？请选择最符合您想法的选项。

1. 在多大程度上您认为美剧能够反映真实的美国社会和文化？

1\_\_\_2\_\_\_3\_\_\_4\_\_\_5\_\_\_6\_\_\_7\_\_\_8\_\_\_9\_\_\_10

一点都不准确

非常准确

2. 您在在多大程度上同意这些观点？请选出最符合您观点的选项。（SA: 非常同意; A: 同意; N: 中立; D: 不同意; SD: 非常不同意）

SA      A      N      D      SD

婚前性行为是一件很

不好的事情                      5      4      3      2      1

服从长辈和领导很重要                      5      4      3      2      1

同性婚姻是合理的                      5      4      3      2      1

竞争让生活变得更好                      5      4      3      2      1

保持现代化生活方式很重要      5      4      3      2      1

3. 下面我将描述一些人。根据旁边的量表，判断这些人和你的观点是非常符合、符合、有一些符合、不符合、根本不符合。（请给每个描述都做出选择）:

非常符合      符合      有一些符合      不符合      根本不符合

V 1. 对于我而言，能够有新点子和创造力非常重要，处理事情的时候也要有自己的方式才好。                      5      4      3      2      1

V 2. 拥有一个安全的生活环境很重要，要尽量避免一切不安定的因素。                      5      4      3      2      1

V 3. 休闲娱乐很重要，要不时“放纵”一下自己。                      5      4      3      2      1

V 4. 多为家庭考虑，做些对家庭好的事情很重要	5	4	3	2	1
V 5. 要指出别人的错误，即使是长辈或者领导，每个人都要平等对待。	5	4	3	2	1
V 6. 敢于探索和冒险很重要，这样能够过一个激动人心的生活。	5	4	3	2	1
V 7. 竞争对于一个人来说并不重要，要避开和别人的争夺胜负。	5	4	3	2	1
V 8. 传统对于我来说很重要，要保持家庭祖辈传承下来的习俗。	5	4	3	2	1
V 9. 节约对于我来说很重要，尽管很喜欢一件东西，如果不是必需品，尽量不买	5	4	3	2	1

---

**第 2 部分:** 在这些关于中国的陈述中，您在多大程度上赞成？请选择最符合您观点的选项。

---

1. 我对中国的经济发展环境满意

1\_\_\_2\_\_\_3\_\_\_4\_\_\_5\_\_\_6\_\_\_7\_\_\_8\_\_\_9\_\_\_10

非常不同意

非常同意

2. 我对中国的社会环境满意

1\_\_\_2\_\_\_3\_\_\_4\_\_\_5\_\_\_6\_\_\_7\_\_\_8\_\_\_9\_\_\_10

非常不同意

非常同意

3. 我对中国的文化环境满意

1\_\_\_2\_\_\_3\_\_\_4\_\_\_5\_\_\_6\_\_\_7\_\_\_8\_\_\_9\_\_\_10

非常不同意

非常同意

4. 我为自己是一个中国人感到自豪

1\_\_\_2\_\_\_3\_\_\_4\_\_\_5\_\_\_6\_\_\_7\_\_\_8\_\_\_9\_\_\_10

非常不同意

非常同意

## Appendix H: The demographic information of participants in the experiment

Treatment Group	Gender	Age	Location	Education Level
1	Female	50	Beijing	Junior College Degree
2	Female	30	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree
3	Female	28	Hangzhou	Bachelor Degree
4	Male	31	Wuhan	Bachelor Degree
5	Male	46	Chengdu	Junior College Degree
6	Male	31	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree
7	Female	24	Wuhan	Bachelor Degree
8	Female	26	Beijing	Bachelor Degree
9	Female	43	Guangzhou	Junior College Degree
10	Female	27	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree
11	Female	23	Wuhan	Bachelor Degree
12	Male	36	Hangzhou	High School Diploma
13	Female	32	Beijing	Junior College Degree
14	Female	23	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree
15	Female	33	Wuhan	Junior College Degree
16	Male	30	Hangzhou	Junior College Degree
17	Male	33	Beijing	Bachelor Degree
18	Male	22	Guangzhou	Junior College Degree
19	Female	26	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree
20	Male	20	Chengdu	Junior College Degree
21	Male	19	Hangzhou	Junior College Degree
22	Male	26	Beijing	Bachelor Degree
23	Female	26	Beijing	Master Degree
24	Male	22	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree
25	Female	28	Wuhan	Bachelor Degree
26	Female	26	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree
27	Male	25	Beijing	Master Degree
28	Male	25	Wuhan	Bachelor Degree
29	Female	27	Hangzhou	Master Degree
30	Female	25	Hangzhou	Master Degree
31	Female	26	Wuhan	Master Degree
32	Male	21	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree
33	Female	24	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree

Control Group	Gender	Age	Location	Education Level
1	Female	28	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree
2	Female	50	Chengdu	Junior College Degree
3	Female	29	Beijing	Bachelor Degree
4	Male	35	Wuhan	Junior College Degree
5	Female	33	Wuhan	Bachelor Degree
6	Female	24	Beijing	Bachelor Degree
7	Male	25	Beijing	Bachelor Degree
8	Male	36	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree

9	Female	46	Guangzhou	Junior College Degree
10	Female	38	Hangzhou	Bachelor Degree
11	Female	27	Beijing	Bachelor Degree
12	Female	29	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree
13	Male	35	Hangzhou	Junior College Degree
14	Female	25	Guangzhou	Master Degree
15	Female	48	Wuhan	Junior College Degree
16	Male	32	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree
17	Male	28	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree
18	Male	45	Hangzhou	Junior College Degree
19	Male	30	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree
20	Male	24	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree
21	Female	28	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree
22	Male	37	Wuhan	Junior College Degree
23	Male	42	Beijing	Bachelor Degree
24	Female	28	Hangzhou	Bachelor Degree
25	Female	32	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree
26	Female	29	Wuhan	Bachelor Degree
27	Female	35	Wuhan	High School Diploma
28	Male	33	Hangzhou	Master Degree
29	Female	30	Hangzhou	Master Degree
30	Male	30	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree
31	Male	21	Hangzhou	Bachelor Degree
32	Male	20	Beijing	Junior College Degree

## Appendix I: The demographic information of participants in the in-depth interview

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Name	Gender	Age	Location	Education Level
Zezhen	Female	50	Beijing	Junior College Degree
Zuwen	Female	33	Wuhan	Junior College Degree
Yixuan	Female	24	Wuhan	Bachelor Degree
Zhigang	Male	36	Hangzhou	High School Diploma
Panli	Female	27	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree
Yanyun	Female	24	Guangzhou	Bachelor Degree
Huhao	Male	31	Wuhan	Bachelor Degree
Xinghua	Female	28	Hangzhou	Bachelor Degree
Kufang	Female	31	Chengdu	Bachelor Degree
Dongfang	Male	33	Beijing	Bachelor Degree

## Appendix J: The structured questions of in-depth interview

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1. Will you continue to watch American television series after this experiment? Why?  
你今后还会继续看美剧么？原因是什么呢？
2. Do you think one should sacrifice their own interest for the honor of the family when there are conflicts between the two?  
在家庭利益和个人利益发生冲突的时候，你会牺牲自己的利益来换取家庭的利益么？（个人和家庭）
3. Would you prefer to live with your parents after getting married, or by yourself like in *The Big Bang Theory*?  
你觉得想结婚以后是和父母一起住比较好，还是像《生活大爆炸》里的一样自己单独住比较好？
4. Do you agree that bosses and employees, the old and young, should have an equal relationship, or it is better to build the relationship by social status and age?  
老板和职工，老人和年轻人相处是是否应该是平等的关系，还是应该按照不同的社会地位和年龄建立不同的关系？（关系和平等）
5. In *House of Cards*, do you think Freddy sacrifice himself for Frank because he is a friend, or because he knew that Frank would be the president? Do you think they could keep their equal relationship as friends despite their disparity in position?  
在《纸牌屋》中，你觉得弗莱迪为了弗兰克的利益而牺牲了自己，是因为他是自己的朋友，还是因为他是总统？你觉得他们能够保持平等的朋友关系么？
6. Do you agree with the statement, ‘be in harmony with the rest of the world’ (Chinese philosophy) or ‘competition with others make life better’? Why?  
你赞同“与世无争”好还是“竞争会让生活变得更美好”？为什么？（竞争和非竞争）
7. In *House of Cards*, is it acceptable for Frank to get ahead by putting his opponents down, or do you think he should have kept a low-key approach and avoided competition with his opponents?  
在《纸牌屋》中，你认为弗兰克为了获得政治资本把别人扳倒，这样好么？还是应该尽量保持低调，避开和对手的冲突？
8. Do you think we should keep our Chinese traditions? Or do you think tradition is an historical burden and it is better to live a modern life? Or do you like tradition and modernity coexisting in our lives?  
你认为是否有必要保持中国的传统？或者认为中国的传统是一种历史负担，我们应该采用现代化的生活方式？（传统和现代）
9. In *Arrow*, it shows the dazzling modern lifestyle in a metropolis; however, it also shows some Chinese cultural elements such as Chinese food, herbs, and arts. Do you think we should keep our tradition, or adopt a modern lifestyle, or have both tradition and modernity in our lives?  
在《绿箭侠》中，主人公奥利弗过着一种现代化的都市生活，但是剧中也展现了许多中国传统的文化元素，比如说中餐，中国草药和艺术。如果让你选的话，你觉得我们现在是要保持中国这些传统文化，还是倾向于都市化的现代生活？
10. In Chinese culture, thrift is an important value. However, nowadays people tend to spend

their future money to purchase luxury products. The main character of *Arrow*, Oliver Queen, a billionaire playboy, lives a flashy lifestyles. Does his material lifestyle attract you? Or do you think he should just buy what he needs?

在中国文化中，节约是一个很重要的价值观。但是现在很多人都开始花明天的钱，来购买奢侈品。在绿箭侠中，主人公奥利弗，亿万富翁，过着光鲜耀眼的生活。他的生活方式有没有吸引你？还是你觉得只要能够获得自己需要的生活必需品就足够了？（节约和享受）

11. Which do you think is more important, 'living a secure life' or 'living an adventurous life'? A secure life means to avoid potential risks in life. An adventurous life means to take risks for the unknown future.

你觉得在生活中，过着“固定的生活”还是“充满冒险的生活方式”，哪种更吸引你？固定的生活方式指的是尽最大的努力去消除潜在的风险，冒险的生活方式指的是冒险去迎接未知的未来。（冒险和谨慎）

12. If you were Frank in *House of Cards*, would you prefer to be the party whip for the rest of your life, or to be the president of United States by taking the risk of being defeated?

在《纸牌屋》中，你觉得弗兰克是应该一直稳稳当当坚持自己当初的职位？还是应该冒险去参选总统，但是又被下台的可能？

13. In *Arrow*, the main character, Oliver, seems very casual about sex. In *House of Cards*, Frank and his wife have an open relationship. What is your attitude toward these views about sex?

在《绿箭侠》中，奥利弗对待性的态度很随意，在纸牌屋中，弗兰克和他的妻子保持的开放的性关系。你觉得他们的这种对待性的开放态度，能够被接受么？（性保守和性开放）

14. The leading male actor in *The Big Bang Theory*, Jim Parsons, is a famous homosexual television star in United States. What is your attitude toward homosexuality?

生活大爆炸的主人公之一的谢耳朵是美国非常著名的同性恋电视明星。你如何看待美国社会对同性恋的开放态度？（性开放）

15. What American values or American life scene impressed you the most in these American television series?

你觉得在美国电视剧中还有哪些美国价值观或者美国生活方式给你留下了深刻的印象？

16. Do you think these American series have impacted your understanding of American culture and values?

你觉得美剧有没有对你多美国文化和价值观的理解产生了影响？

17. How accurately do you think American television series reflect US society and culture?

Please give some examples based on the television series that you have watched.

通过观看这些美剧，你认为在多大程度上，你所看到的美国社会和文化是真实的？

18. Based on your observations of America from American television series, are you satisfied with the current social, economic, and cultural conditions in China?

你觉得美剧所呈现出来的美国会不会影响你对中国当前经济社会，经济和文化状况的理解和感知？

19. Does this influenced you expectations about the future in China?

你觉得这种观点会不会影响你对中国未来发展的期盼？

## Appendix K: The approval of Human Ethics Committee

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### HUMAN ETHICS COMMITTEE

Secretary, Rebecca Robinson  
Telephone: +64 03 364 2987, Extn 45588  
Email: [human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)

Ref: HEC 2016/05

13 May 2016

Meng Xu  
Media and Communication  
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Meng

The Human Ethics Committee advises that your research proposal "Online Cultivation: The Impact of American Television Series on Chinese Audiences' Cultural Values" has been considered and approved.

Please note that this approval is subject to the incorporation of the amendments you have provided in your email of 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

Best wishes for your project.

Yours sincerely

*R. Robinson*  
pp.

Jane Maidment  
**Chair**  
*University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee*



## Appendix L: Consent form for the experiment participants

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Media and Communication Department

媒体与传播学系

Telephone:

电话: +64 3 366 7001 ext. 8682

Email:

邮箱: [mxu14@uclive.ac.nz](mailto:mxu14@uclive.ac.nz)

### The Study of the Impact of American TV series on Chinese

#### Audiences' Values

#### 美国电视剧对中国观众价值观的影响研究

#### Consent Form

#### 同意书

Include a statement regarding each of the following:

包括关于以下声明:

☐ I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

我悉知课题内容以及有询问的机会。

☐ I understand what is required of me if I agree to take part in the research.

我知晓该课题的要求，如果同意参加此研究。

☐ I understand that participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time without penalty. Withdrawal of participation will also include the withdrawal of any information I have provided should this remain practically achievable.

我了解此次参与是自愿的，我可以随时退出并免受处罚。退出参与包括撤销我所有提供的信息，并且保持能够实际可行。

☐ I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and that any published or reported results will not identify the participants. I understand that a thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library.

我了解我所提供的信息和观点均被研究者保密，任何发表的报告结果均不指明参与者。我知道论文是一种公共文献，将能够通过坎特伯雷大学的图书馆进行查阅。

☐ I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and/or in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed after five years.

我知晓所有的研究数据将经过加密处理，通过电子文件的形式储存在安全的设施中，并在五年后销毁。

☐ I understand the risks associated with taking part and how they will be managed.

我了解相关的参与风险以及如果去规避这些风险。

☐ I understand that I am able to receive a report on the findings of the study by contacting the researcher at the conclusion of the project.

我知晓我可以得到一份关于课题成果的研究报告。

☐ I understand that I can contact the researcher *Meng Xu*, [mxu14@uclive.ac.nz](mailto:mxu14@uclive.ac.nz) for further information. If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch ([human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz))

我知道我能联系研究者（徐盟，[mxu14@uclive.ac.nz](mailto:mxu14@uclive.ac.nz)）去获取进一步的信息。如果有任何异议，我能够和坎特博雷大学学术道德委员会取得联系（地址：Private Bag 4800, Christchurch 邮箱：[human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)）

☐ I would like a summary of the results of the project.

我想获得一份课题结果概要。

☐ By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project.

我签署并同意参与此项课题研究。

Name姓名:                      Signed签字:                      Date日期:

Email address电子邮件 (*for report of findings, if applicable 获得研究结果报告用，选填*):

## Appendix M: Recruitment advertisement for the experiment

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### Television Lovers Wanted

### 寻找电视爱好者参与研究

If you are a television lover who has never seen American television before, 19-50 years old, and with a High School Diploma or above diploma, you are perfect for this study. This will help us to get a better understanding of the online cultivation of cultural values.

如果您是一位从未看过美国电视剧的电视爱好者，处于 19-50 岁年龄段，并且拥有高中或以上学历，我们期待您的参与。您的参与将能够帮助我们更好的理解网络电视涵化作用对观众文化价值观的影响。

You are required to view three seasons of the most popular American television series: *The Big Bang Theory*, *House of Card*, and *Arrow*. You can watch them based on your own schedule within three months. However, you can drop out the program anytime you are not interested anymore. Before and after each season of the series, you need to fill a survey, which takes 3 minutes. After you have finished all of them, you are invited to participate in an interview lasting 15-20 minutes.

你将会收看三季在中国最受欢迎的美剧：《生活大爆炸》、《纸牌屋》、《绿箭侠》。在接下来的三个月里，你可以依照自己的收视习惯来完成收视。而且，你可以在任何时间选择退出，如果你对其不感兴趣。在看完每季美剧之前和之后，你需要填一个耗时约三分的问卷。当你看完所有美剧之后，你将可能会被邀请参与一个长达 15-20 分钟的访谈。

If you are interested, please contact Meng Xu (mxu14@uclive.ac.nz, Phone: +64 0223150017) in the Department of media and communication at the University of Canterbury.

如果您对参与本试验感兴趣，请联系坎特伯雷大学媒体与传播系的徐盟（邮箱：mxu14@uclive.ac.nz，电话：+64 0223150017）